MEDITATIONS AND CONTEMPLATIONS.

In TWO VOLUMES.

CONTAINING,

VOL. I.	VOL. II.
MEDITATIONS among the TOMBS; And REFLECTIONS on a FLOWER-GARDEN.	CONTEMPLATIONS on the NIGHT; And CONTEMPLATIONS on the STARRY HEAVENS.

By JAMES HERVEY, A. B.
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BRITISH MUSEUM
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ADVERTISEMENT.

I MUST entreat the purchaſers of the *former* Editions, to excuſe the Freedom I have taken in making ſome conſiderable Additions to *this*. It has been at the Perſuaſion of ſeveral very judicious Friends, who apprehended, the Piece might be more uſeful, and leſs unworthy of the public Patronage, if it touched upon ſome very intereſting Subjects, hitherto omitted. As I had no *Views*, but to render the Performance more pleaſing and ſerviceable: none, I hope, will be offended at my *Practice*, or complain of it as *injurious*. Nevertheleſs, as I would willingly avoid, whatever might ſeem to ſtand in need of an APOLOGY; I deſire Leave to declare, that no future Enlargements, or Alterations, ſhall be ſuffered to deprecate what, with deepeſt Gratitude for their paſt Encouragement, I *now* commit to the Candour of the Public.

On Mr. HERVEY's

MEDITATIONS.

IN theſe lov'd ſcenes what rapt'rous graces ſhine,
Live in each leaf, and breathe in ev'ry Line!
What ſacred beauties beam throughout the whole,
To charm the ſenſe, and ſteal upon the Soul!
In claſſic elegance, and thoughts——his own,
We ſee our faults, as in a mirror ſhewn:
Each Truth, in glaring characters expreſt,
All own the twin reſemblance in their Breaſt:
His eaſy periods, and perſuaſive page,
At once amend, and entertain the Age:
Nature's wide Fields all open to his view,
He charms the mind with ſomething ever new:
On Fancy's pinions his advent'rous Soul
Wantons unbounded, and pervades the whole:
From Death's dark caverns in the earth below,
To Spheres, where planets roll, or comets glow.
See him explore, with more than human eyes,
The dreary Sepulchre, where Granvil lies:
Converſe with ſtones, or monumental braſs:
The rude Inſcriptions,——or the painted glaſs:
To gloomy vaults deſcend with awful tread,
And view the ſilent manſions of the dead.
To gayer ſcenes he next adapts his lines,
Where laviſh nature in embroid'ry ſhines:
The Jeſs'mine Groves, the Woodbine's fragrant Bow'rs,
With all the painted family of Flowers:
There, Sachariſſa! in each fleeting Grace,
Read all the tranſient honours of thy face.

With

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With equal dignity, now ſee him riſe
To paint the ſable horrors of the ſkies:
When all the wide horizon lies in ſhade;
And midnight phantoms ſweep along the glade:
All nature huſh'd—— a ſolemn ſilence reigns,
And ſcarce a breeze diſturbs the ſleeping plains.
Laſt, yet not leſs, in majeſty of phraſe,
He draws the full-orb'd moon's expanſive blaze;
The waving meteors, trembling from on high,
With all the mute artill'ry of the ſky:
Syſtems on ſyſtems, which in order roll,
And dart their lambent beams from pole to pole.
Hail, mighty genius, whoſe excurſive ſoul,
No bounds confine, no limits can controul:
Whoſe eye expatiates, and whoſe mind can rove
Through earth, through æther, and the realms above:
From things inanimate can direct the ¶ rod,
In juſt gradation, to aſcend to GOD.
Taught by thy lines, ſee hoary age grows wiſe,
And all the rebel in his boſom dies:
E'en thoughtleſs youth, in luxury of blood,
Fly the infectious world, and dare——be good:
Thy ſacred truths ſhall reach th' impervious heart,
Diſcord ſhall ceaſe, diſeaſe forget to ſmart:
E'en malice love, and calumny commend,
Pride beg an alms, and av'rice turn a friend.
Center'd in CHRIST, who fires the ſoul within,
The fleſh ſhall know no pain; the ſoul, no ſin:
E'en in the terrors of expiring breath,
We bleſs the friendly ſtroke, and live——in death.

Oxford, April 28, 1748.

¶ In alluſion to the cuſtom of ſhewing curious objects, and particularizing their reſpective delicacies, by the *pointing* of a rod.

On Mr. HERVEY's MEDITATIONS.

By a Physician.

CELESTIAL Meditant! whoſe ardors riſe
Deep from the Tombs, and kindle to the ſkies;
How ſhall an earthly Bard's profaner ſtring
Reſound the flights of thy ſeraphic wing?
When great ELIJAH, in the fiery car,
Flam'd viſibly to Heav'n, a living ſtar,
A ſeer remain'd to *thunder* what he knew,
And with his mantle caught his ſpirit too.
Wit, fancy, fire, and elegance, have long
Been loſt in vicious, or ignoble, Song:
Sunk from the chaſtely grand, the pure ſublime,
They flatter'd wealth and pow'r, or murder'd time.
'Tis thine their devious luſtre to reduce,
To prove their nobleſt pow'r, their genuine uſe;
From earth-born fumes to clear their tainted flame,
And point their flight to Heav'n——from whence they came.
O more than Bard in proſe! to whom belong
Harmonious ſtile and thought, in rhymeleſs ſong;
Oft, by thy friendly conduct, let me tread
The ſoftly whiſp'ring manſions of the dead:
Where the grim form, calcining hinds and lords,
Grins at each fond diſtinction pride records.
Dumb, with immortal energy they teach;
Lifeleſs, they threaten, mould'ring, as they preach

To

To each ſucceeding age, thro' ev'ry clime,
The ſpan of life, and endleſs round of time:
Hence may propitious melancholy flow,
And ſafety find me in the vaults of woe,
While ev'ry virtue forms thy mental feaſt,
I glow with fair ſincerity at leaſt:
I feel *(thy face unknown)* thy heart refin'd,
And taſte, with bliſs, the beauties of thy mind;
Collecting clearly, thro' thy ſacred plan,
What reverence of God! what love to man!
——O! when at laſt our deathleſs forms ſhall riſe!
And flow'rs and ſtars deſiſt to moralize;
Shall then my ſoul, by thine inform'd, ſurvey,
And bear the ſplendors of eſſential day?
But while my thoughts indulge the glorious ſcope,
(My utmoſt worth beneath my humbleſt hope)
Conſcience, or ſome exulting angel, cries,
" No lazy wiſhes reach above the ſkies.
" Would you indeed the perfect ſcenes ſurvey,
" And ſhare the triumphs of unbounded day
" His love diffuſive life with ardor live;
" And die like this divine contemplative."

London, July 9, 1748.

TO HIS FRIEND

MR. HERVEY.

BY A PHYSICIAN.

TO form the taſte, and raiſe the nobler part,
To mend the morals, and to warm the heart;
To trace the genial ſource, we Nature call,
And prove the God of Nature friend of all;
HERVEY for this his mental landſcape drew,
And ſketch'd the whole creation out to view.
TH' enamel'd bloom, and variegated flow'r,
Whoſe crimſon changes with the changing hour;
The humble ſhrub, whoſe fragrance ſcents the morn,
With buds diſcloſing to the early dawn;
The oaks that grace Britannia's mountains ſide,
And ſpicy Lebanon's ſuperior † pride;
All loudly SOV'REIGN EXCELLENCE proclaim,
And animated worlds confeſs the ſame.
THE azure fields, that form'd th' extended ſky,
The planetary globes that roll on high,
And ſolar orbs of proudeſt blaze, combine,
To act ſubſervient to the great deſign.
MEN, angels, ſeraphs, join the gen'ral voice;
And in the Lord of Nature, ALL rejoice.
HIS, the grey *Winter's* venerable guiſe,
Its ſhrowded glories, and inſtructive ſkies §;
HIS, the ſnow's plumes, that brood the ſick'ning blade;
HIS, the bright pendant, that impearls the glade,
The

† The Cedar.

§ Referring to the Winter-Piece; printed at the end of the Second Volume.

The waving foreſt, or the whiſp'ring brake,
The ſurging billow, or the ſleeping lake.
The SAME, who pours the beauties of the ſpring,
Or mounts the whirlwind's deſolating wing.
The SAME, who ſmiles in nature's peaceful form,
Frowns in the tempeſt and directs the ſtorm.
'TIS thine, bright teacher, to improve the age;
'TIS thine, whoſe life's a comment on thy page;
Thy happy page! whoſe periods ſweetly flow,
Whoſe figures charm us, and whoſe colours glow.
Where *artleſs* piety pervades the whole,
Refines the genius, and exalts the ſoul.
For, let the witling argue all he can,
It is religion ſtill, that makes the man.
'TIS *This*, my friend, that ſtreaks our morning bright;
'Tis *This*, that gilds the horrors of our night.
When wealth forſakes us, and when friends are few;
When friends are faithleſs, or when foes purſue;
'Tis *This*, that wards the blow or kills the ſmart;
Diſarms affliction, or repels its dart;
Within the breaſt bids pureſt rapture riſe;
Bids ſmiling conſcience ſpread her cloudleſs ſkies.
WHEN the ſtorm thickens, and the thunder rolls,
When the earth trembles to th' affrighted poles;
The virtuous mind nor doubts, nor fears aſſail,
For ſtorms are zephyrs, or a gentler gale.
AND when diſeaſe obſtructs the lab'ring breath,
When the heart ſickens, and each pulſe is death;
E'en then religion ſhall ſuſtain the juſt,
Grace their laſt moments, nor deſert their duſt.

Auguſt 5, 1748.

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TO

MISS R——— T———.

MADAM,

THESE Reflections, the one on the deepeſt, the other on the gayeſt ſcenes of nature, when they proceeded privately from the *pen*, were addreſſed to a lady of the moſt valuable endowments: Who crowned all her other endearing qualities, by a cordial love of Chriſt, and an exemplary conformity to his divine pattern. She, alas! lives no longer on earth; unleſs it be in the honours of a diſtinguiſhed character, and the bleeding remembrance of her acquaintance.

IT is impoſſible, Madam, to wiſh you a richer bleſſing, or a more ſubſtantial happineſs, than that the ſame ſpirit of unfeigned faith, the ſame courſe of undefiled religion, which has enabled her to triumph over death, may both animate and adorn your life. And you will permit me to declare, that my chief inducement in requeſting your acceptance of the following Meditations, now they make a public appearance from the *preſs*, is, that they are deſigned

deſigned to cultivate the ſame ſacred *principle*, and to promote the ſame excellent *practice*.

LONG, Madam, may you *bloom* in all the vivacity and amiableneſs of youth, like the charming ſubject of one of theſe contemplations. But at the ſame time remember, that, with regard to ſuch inferior accompliſhments, you muſt one day *fade*, (may it prove ſome very remote period!) like the mournful objects of the other. This conſideration will prompt you to go on, as you have begun, in adding the *meekneſs* of *wiſdom*, and all the *beauties* of *holineſs*, to the graces of an engaging perſon, and the refinements of a polite education.

AND might——O! might the enſuing hints furniſh you with the leaſt aſſiſtance, in proſecuting ſo deſirable an end; might they contribute, in any degree, to eſtabliſh your faith, or elevate your devotion; they would, then, adminiſter to the author ſuch a ſatisfaction, as applauſe cannot give, nor cenſure take away: A ſatisfaction, which I ſhould be able to enjoy, even in thoſe awful moments, when all that captivates the eye is ſinking in darkneſs, and every glory of this lower world diſappearing for ever.

THESE

THESE wiſhes, Madam, as they are a moſt agreeable employ of my thoughts, ſo they come attended with this additional circumſtance of pleaſure, that they are alſo the ſincereſt expreſſion of that very great eſteem, with which I am,

MADAM,

Your moſt Obedient,

Moſt Humble Servant,

Weſton Favell, near
Northampton,
May 20, 1746.

JAMES HERVEY.

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PREFACE.

THE firſt of theſe occaſional Meditations begs leave to remind my readers of their *latter end*; and would invite them to ſet, not their houſes only, but, which is inexpreſſibly more needful, their ſouls, in order: That they may be able, through all the intermediate ſtages, to look forward upon their approaching exit, without any *anxious apprehenſions*: And, when the great change commences, may bid Adieu to terreſtrial things, with all the *calmneſs* of a chearful reſignation, with all the *comforts* of a well-grounded faith.

The other attempts to ſketch out ſome little traces of the *all-ſufficiency* of our *Redeemer*, for the grand and gracious purpoſes of everlaſting ſalvation; that a ſenſe of his unutterable dignity, and infinite perfections, may incite us to regard him with ſentiments of the moſt profound *veneration*; to long for an aſſured intereſt in his merits, with all the ardency of *deſire*; and to truſt in his powerful mediation, with an *affiance* not to be ſhaken by any temptations, not to be ſhared with any performances of our own.

I flatter myſelf, that the thoughts conceived among the *Tombs* may be welcome to the ſerious and *humane* mind; becauſe, as there are few, who have not conſigned the remains of ſome dear *Relations*, or honoured friends, to thoſe ſilent repoſitories; ſo there are none, but muſt be ſenſible, that this is the *houſe appointed for all living*; and that they themſelves are ſhortly to remove into the ſame ſolemn manſions. ——And who would not turn aſide, for a while, from the moſt favourite amuſements, to view the *place*, where his once-loved *companions lie?* Who would not ſometimes ſurvey thoſe *apartments*, where

where he *himſelf* is to take up an *abode*, till time ſhall be no more?

As to the other little eſſay, may I not humbly preſume, that the very ſubject itſelf will recommend the remarks? For, who is not delighted with the proſpect of the blooming creation, and even charmed with the *delicate attractions* of flowers? Who does not covet to aſſemble them in the garden, or wear them in a Noſegay? ſince this is a paſſion ſo univerſal, who would not be willing to render it productive of the ſublimeſt improvements?———This piece of *holy frugality*, I have ventured to ſuggeſt, and endeavoured to exemplify, in the ſecond letter: that, while the hand is cropping the tranſient beauties of a flower, the attentive mind may be enriching itſelf with ſolid and laſting good.——And I cannot but entertain ſome pleaſing hopes, that the niceſt taſte may receive and reliſh *religious impreſſions*, when they are conveyed by ſuch *lovely monitors*; when the inſtructive leſſons are found, not on the leaves of ſome formidable *Folio*, but ſtand legible on the fine *ſarcenet* of a *Narciſſus*; when they ſavour not of the *lamp* and *Recluſe*, but come breathing from the fragrant boſom of a *Jonquil*.

MEDI-

MEDITATIONS

AMONG THE

TOMBS.

Every Stone that we look upon, in this Repoſitory of paſt Ages, is both an Entertainment, *and a* Monitor.

Plain-Dealer, Vol. I. No. 42.

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MEDITATIONS

AMONG THE

TOMBS.

IN A LETTER TO A LADY.

MADAM,

TRAVELLING lately into Cornwall, I happened to alight at a conſiderable village in that county: where, finding myſelf under an unexpected neceſſity of ſtaying a little, I took a walk to the church. The doors, like the Heaven to which they lead, were wide open; and readily admitted an unworthy ſtranger. Pleaſed with the opportunity, I reſolved to ſpend a few minutes under the ſacred roof.

IN a ſituation ſo retired and awful, I could not avoid falling into a train of meditations, ſerious and mournfully pleaſing. Which, I truſt, were in ſome degree profitable to me, while they poſſeſſed and warmed my thoughts; and if they may adminiſter any ſatisfaction to you, Madam, now they are recollected and committed to writing, I ſhall receive a freſh pleaſure from them.

IT was an ancient Pile, reared by hands that ages ago were mouldered into duſt.—Situate in the centre of a large burial ground, remote from all the noiſe and hurry of tumultuous life.—The body ſpacious; the ſtructure lofty; the whole magnificently plain. A row of regular pillars extended themſelves

through the midſt; and ſupported the roof with ſimplicity, and with dignity.—The light, that paſſed through the windows, ſeemed to ſhed a kind of luminous obſcurity, which gave every object a grave and venerable air.—The deep ſilence, added to the gloomy aſpect, and both heightened by the lonelineſs of the place, greatly increaſed the ſolemnity of the ſcene.—A ſort of religious dread ſtole inſenſibly on my mind, as I advanced, all penſive and thoughtful, along the inmoſt iſle. Such as huſhed every ruder paſſion, and diſſipated all the gay images of an alluring world.

HAVING adored that eternal Majeſty, who, far from being confined to temples made with hands, has heaven for his throne, and the earth for his foot-ſtool.—I took particular notice of a handſome altar-piece, preſented, as I was afterwards informed, by the maſter-builders of Stow *; out of gratitude, I preſume, to that gracious GOD, who carried them through their work, and enabled them to "bring forth their top-ſtone with joy."

O! how amiable is gratitude! eſpecially when it has the Supreme Benefactor for its object. I have always looked upon gratitude, as the moſt exalted principle that can actuate the heart of man. It has ſomething noble, diſintereſted, and (if I may be allowed the term) generouſly devout. Repentance indicates our Nature fallen, and Prayer turns chiefly upon a regard to one's ſelf. But the exerciſes of gratitude

* The name of a noble ſeat, belonging to the late earl of Bath; remarkable formerly for its excellent workmanſhip, and elegant furniture; once the grand reſort of the quality and gentry of the weſt; but now demoliſhed, laid even with the ground, and ſcarce one ſtone left upon another. So that corn may grow, or nettles ſpring where Stow lately ſtood.

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gratitude ſubſiſted in Paradiſe, when there was no fault to deplore; and will be perpetuated in heaven, when "GOD ſhall be All in All."

THE language of this ſweet temper is, "I am unſpeakably obliged: what return ſhall I make?"—And, ſurely, it is no improper expreſſion of an unfeigned thankfulneſs, to decorate our Creator's courts, and beautify "the place where his honour dwelleth." Of old, the habitation of his feet was glorious; let it not now be ſordid or contemptible. It muſt grieve an ingenuous mind, and be a reproach to any people, to have their own houſes wainſcotted with cedar, and painted with vermilion; while the temple of the LORD of Hoſts is deſtitute of every decent ornament.

HERE I recollected, and was charmed with Solomon's fine addreſs to the Almighty, at the dedication of his famous Temple. With immenſe charge, and exquiſite ſkill, he had erected the moſt rich and finiſhed ſtructure that the ſun ever ſaw. Yet, upon a review of his work, and a reflection on the tranſcendent perfections of the Godhead, how he exalts the one, and abaſes the other!—The building was too glorious for the mightieſt monarch to inhabit; too ſacred for unhallowed feet even to enter; yet infinitely too mean for the Deity to reſide in. It was, and the royal worſhipper acknowledged it to be, a moſt marvellous vouchſafement in uncreated excellency, to "put his name there." The whole paſſage breathes ſuch a delicacy, and is animated with ſuch a ſublimity of ſentiment, that I cannot perſuade myſelf to paſs on without repeating it. "* But will GOD indeed dwell on earth? Behold!

* 1 Kings viii. 27. But will—A fine abrupt beginning, moſt ſignificantly deſcribing the amazement and rapture of the royal prophet's mind!—GOD: he uſes no epi-

hold! the Heaven, and Heaven of Heavens, cannot contain Thee; how much leſs this Houſe that I have builded?"—Incomparable ſaying! worthy the wiſeſt of men. Who would not chooſe to poſſeſs ſuch an elevated devotion, rather than to own all the glittering materials of that ſumptuous edifice?

We are apt to be ſtruck with admiration at the beautiful grandeur of a maſterly performance in Architecture. And, perhaps, on a ſight of the ancient ſanctuary, ſhould have made the ſuperficial obſervation of the Diſciples, "what manner of ſtones, and what buildings are here?"—But what a nobler turn

thet, where writers of inferior diſcernment would have been fond to multiply them: but ſpeaks of the Deity, as an incomprehenſible being, whoſe excellency is exalted above all praiſe.——Dwell: To beſtow on ſinful creatures a propitious look, or favour them with a tranſient viſit of kindneſs, would have been an unutterable obligation: will he then vouchſafe to fix his abode, and take up his ſtated reſidence among them?—Indeed: A word, in this connexion, exceedingly emphatical; expreſſive of a condeſcenſion, wonderful and extraordinary almoſt beyond all credibility.—Then a moſt important reaſon is ſuggeſted for the preceding admiration: Behold: Intimating the continued, or rather the increaſing ſurprize of the ſpeaker, and awakening the attention of the hearer—Behold! the Heaven: The ſpacious concave of the firmament, that wide-extended azure circumference, in which worlds unnumbered perform their revolutions, is too ſcanty an apartment for the Godhead.——Nay, the Heaven of Heavens: Thoſe vaſtly higher tracts, which lie far beyond the limits of human ſurvey, to which our very thoughts can hardly ſoar; even thoſe (unbounded as they are) cannot afford an adequate habitation for Jehovah: even theſe dwindle into a point, when compared with the infinitude of his eſſence; even theſe "are as nothing before him."—How much leſs proportionate then is this poor diminutive ſpeck, which I have been erecting and embelliſhing, to ſo auguſt a preſence, ſo immenſe a majeſty?

turn of thought, and juſter taſte of things, does it diſcover, to join with Iſrael's King, in celebrating the condeſcenſion of the divine Inhabitant! That the high and lofty One, who fills immenſity with his glory, ſhould, in a peculiar manner, fix his abode there! ſhould there manifeſt an extraordinary degree of his benedictive preſence; permit ſinful mortals to approach his Majeſty, and promiſe "to make them joyful in his houſe of prayer!"—This ſhould more ſenſibly affect our hearts, than the moſt curious arrangement of ſtones can delight our eyes.

NAY the everlaſting GOD does not diſdain to dwell in our ſouls, by his holy ſpirit; and to make even our Bodies his temple.——Tell me, ye that frame critical judgments, and balance nicely the diſtinction of things, "Is this moſt aſtoniſhing, or "moſt rejoicing?" he humbleth himſelf, the ſcripture aſſures us, even to behold the things that are in Heaven *. 'Tis a moſt condeſcending favour, if HE pleaſes to take the leaſt approving notice of angels and archangels, when they bow down in homage from their celeſtial thrones: and yet will he graciouſly regard, will he be intimately united to poor, polluted, breathing duſt? —— O! unparallel'd honour! invaluable privilege! be this my portion, and I ſhall not covet crowns, nor envy conquerors.

BUT let me remember, what a Sanctity of Diſpoſition, and Uprightneſs of Converſation, ſo exalted a relation demands: remember this, "and rejoice "with trembling" —— durſt I commit any iniquity, while I tread theſe hallowed courts? could the Jewiſh High-Prieſt allow himſelf in any known tranſgreſſion, while he made that ſolemn yearly entrance ‡ into the Holy of Holies, and ſtood before the immediate preſence of JEHOVAH! No,

* Pſalm cxiii. 6. ‡ Hebr. ix. 7.

truly. In ſuch circumſtances, a thinking perſon muſt ſhudder at the moſt remote ſolicitations to any wilful offence. I ſhould now be ſhocked at the leaſt indecency of behaviour, and am apprehenſive of every appearance of evil.—And why do we not carry this holy jealouſy, into all our ordinary life? why do we not, in every place, ‖ reverence ourſelves; as perſons dedicated to the divinity, as living temples of the godhead? For, if we are real, and not merely nominal chriſtians, the GOD of glory, according to his own promiſe, † dwells in us, and walks in us.—O! that this one doctrine of our religion might operate, with an abiding efficacy, upon our conſciences! it would be inſtead of a thouſand Laws, to regulate our conduct; inſtead of a thouſand Motives, to quicken us in holineſs. Under the influence of ſuch a conviction, we ſhould ſtudy to maintain a purity of intention; a dignity of action; and "to walk worthy of HIM," who has called us to this moſt ſacred union with his bleſſed ſelf.

THE next thing that engaged my attention was the Lettered Floor: the pavement, ſomewhat like Ezekiel's roll, was written over from one end to the other. I ſoon perceived the compariſon to hold good in another reſpect; and the Inſcriptions to be matter of "Mourning, Lamentation, and "Woe."

‖ ——————— παντων δε μαλις' αισχυνεο σ' αὐτον, was the favourite maxim of Pythagoras, and ſuppoſed to be the beſt moral precept ever given to the heathen world. With what ſuperior force, and infinite advantage, does the argument take place in the chriſtian ſcheme! Where we are taught to regard ourſelves not merely as intellectual Beings, that have Reaſon for our monitor; but as conſecrated Creatures, who have a God of the moſt conſummate perfection ever with us, ever in us.

† 2 Cor. vi. 16.

"Woe." They ſeemed to court my obſervation; ſilently inviting me to read them.——And what would theſe dumb monitors inform me of?—"That "beneath their little circumferences, were depoſit-"ed ſuch and ſuch pieces of clay, which once liv-"ed, and moved, and talked: that they had receiv-"ed a charge to preſerve their names, and were "the remaining truſtees of their memory."

AH! ſaid I, is ſuch my ſituation? the adorable Creator around me, and the bones of my fellow-creatures under me! ſurely, then, I have great reaſon to cry out with the revering patriarch, How dreadful is this place! † Seriouſneſs and devotion become this houſe for ever. May I never enter it lightly or irreverently; but with a profound awe, and godly fear!

"Oh! that they were wiſe!" § ſaid the inſpired penman. It was his laſt wiſh for his dear people: he breathed it out, and gave up the ghoſt.—But what is wiſdom? it conſiſts not in refined ſpeculations, accurate reſearches into nature, or an univerſal acquaintance with hiſtory. The divine lawgiver ſettles this important point in his next aſpiration: "Oh "that they underſtood this!" that they had right apprehenſions of their ſpiritual intereſts, and eternal concerns! that they had eyes to diſcern, and inclinations to purſue, the things which belong to their peace!—But how ſhall they attain this valuable knowledge? I ſend them not, adds the illuſtrious teacher, to turn over all the volumes of literature: they may much more expeditiouſly acquire this ſcience of life, by conſidering their latter End. This ſpark of heaven is often loſt under the glitter of pompous erudition; but ſhines clearly in the gloomy manſions of the tomb. Drowned in the gentle whiſper, amidſt the noiſe of mortal affairs; but

* Ezek. ii. 10. † Gen. xxviii. 17. § Deut. xxxii. 29.

ſpeaks diſtinctly, in the retirements of ſerious contemplation. —— Behold! how providentially I am brought to the School of Wiſdom! * the grave is the moſt faithful † maſter; and theſe inſtances of mortality, the moſt inſtructive leſſons —— Come then, calm attention, and compoſe my thoughts; come, thou celeſtial ſpirit, and enlighten my mind, that I may ſo peruſe theſe awful pages, as to "become wiſe unto ſalvation."

EXAMINING the records of mortality, I found the memorials of a § promiſcuous multitude. They were huddled, at leaſt they reſted together, without any regard to rank or ſeniority. None were ambitious of the uppermoſt rooms, or chief ſeats, in the houſe of mourning. None entertained fond and eager expectations of being honourably greeted in their darkſome cells. The man of years and experience, reputed as an oracle in his generation, was content to lie down at the feet of a babe. In this houſe appointed for all living, the Servant was equally accommodated and lodged in the ſame ſtory with his Maſter. The poor Indigent lay as ſoftly, and ſlept as ſoundly, as the moſt opulent Poſſeſſor. All the diſtinction that ſubſiſted, was, a graſſy hillock, bound with oſiers; or a ſepulchral ſtone, ornamented with imagery.

WHY then, ſaid my working thoughts, oh! why ſhould we raiſe ſuch a mighty ſtir about Superiority and Precedence, when the next remove will

* The man, how wiſe, who, ſick of gaudy ſcenes,
Is led by choice to take his favourite walk
Beneath death's gloomy, ſilent, cypreſs ſhades,
Unpierc'd by vanity's fantaſtic ray!
To read his monuments, to weigh his duſt,
Viſit his vaults, and dwell among the tombs!
Night Thoughts.

† Wait the great teacher death. Pope.

§ Miſta ſenum ac juvenum denſantur funera. Hor.

will reduce us all to a ſtate of equal meanneſs? why ſhould we exalt ourſelves, or debaſe others; ſince we muſt all, one day, be upon a common level, and blended together in the ſame undiſtinguiſhed duſt? Oh! that this conſideration might humble my own, and others pride; and ſink our imaginations as low, as our habitations will ſhortly be!

AMONG theſe confuſed relics of humanity, there are without doubt, perſons of contrary intereſts, and contradicting ſentiments: but death, like ſome able days-man, has laid his hand on the contending parties, and brought all their differences to an * amicable concluſion. Here enemies, ſworn enemies, dwell together in unity. They drop every imbittered thought, and forget that they once were foes. Perhaps, their crumbling bones mix, as they moulder: and thoſe who, while they lived, ſtood aloof in irreconcileable variance; here fall into mutual embraces, and even incorporate with each other in the grave——Oh! what we might learn from theſe friendly aſhes, not to perpetuate the memory of injuries; not to foment the fever of reſentment; nor cheriſh the turbulence of paſſion: that there may be as little animoſity and diſagreement in the land of the living, as there is in the congregation of the dead!—But I ſuſpend for a while ſuch general obſervations, and addreſs myſelf to a more particular inquiry.

YONDER white ſtone, emblem of the innocence it covers, informs the beholder of one, who breathed out its tender ſoul, almoſt in the inſtant of receiving it.——There, the peaceful infant, without ſo much as knowing what labour and vexation mean, "† lies ſtill and is quiet; it ſleeps and is at reſt." Staying only to waſh away its native impurity in the

* "Hic Motus Animorum, atque hæc certamina tanta,
Pulveris exigui Jactu compreſſa quieſcent."

† Job iii. 13.

laver of regeneration, it bids a ſpeedy adieu to time, and terreſtrial things.—What did the little haſty ſojourner find, ſo forbidding and diſguſtful in our upper world, to occaſion its precipitant exit? 'tis written, indeed, of its ſuffering Saviour, that when he had taſted the vinegar mingled with gall, he would not drink†: and, did our new-come ſtranger, begin to ſip the cup of life: but, perceiving the Bitterneſs, turn away its head, and refuſe the Draught? was this the cauſe, why the wary babe only opened its eyes; juſt looked on the light; and then withdrew, into the more inviting regions of undiſturbed repoſe?

O! fortunate voyager; that was no ſooner launched, than arrived at the Haven‡!—But more happy they, who have paſſed the waves, and weathered all the ſtorms of a troubleſome and dangerous world; who, "thro' many tribulations, have "entered into the kingdom of heaven;" and thereby brought Honour to their divine convoy, adminiſtered Comfort to the companions of their toil, and left an inſtructive Example to ſucceeding Pilgrims.

O! happy probationer! accepted without being exerciſed! it was thy peculiar privilege, not to feel the ſlighteſt of thoſe evils which oppreſs thy ſurviving kindred; which frequently fetch Groans from the moſt manly fortitude, or moſt elevated faith. The arrows of Calamity, barbed with anguiſh, are often fixed deep in our choiceſt comforts. The fiery darts of Temptation, ſhot from the hand of hell, are always flying in ſhowers around our integrity. To

† Math. xxvii. 34.

‡ Happy the babe, who privileg'd by Fate
To ſhorter labour, and a lighter weight,
Received but Yeſterday the gift of breath,
Order'd to-morrow to return to death.

Prior's Sol.

To thee, ſweet babe, both theſe diſtreſſes and dangers were alike unknown.

CONSIDER this, ye mourning Parents, and dry up your tears. Why ſhould you lament, that your little-ones are crowned with victory, before the ſword was drawn, or the conflict begun?——perhaps, the ſupreme diſpoſer of events foreſaw, ſome inevitable Snare of Temptation forming, or ſome dreadful Storm of Adverſity impending. And why ſhould you be ſo diſſatisfied, with that kind Precaution; which houſed your pleaſant plant, and removed into ſhelter a tender flower, before the thunders roared; before the lightnings flew; before the tempeſt poured its rage?——O remember! they are not loſt, but "taken away from the Evil to come."*

AT the ſame time, let Survivors, doomed to bear the Heat and Burden of the Day, reflect, for their encouragement, that it is more honourable to have entered the liſts, and to have fought the good fight, before they come off conquerors. They, who have borne the Croſs, and ſubmitted to afflicted providences, with a chearful reſignation; have girded up the loins of their mind, and performed their maſter's Will, with an honeſt and perſevering fidelity: —Theſe, having glorified their Redeemer on earth, will, probably, be as Stars of the firſt Magnitude in heaven. They will ſhine with brighter beams, be repleniſhed with ſtronger joys, in the LORD's everlaſting kingdom.

HERE lies the grief of a fond mother, and the blaſted expectation of an indulgent father.—The Youth grew up, like a well-watered plant; he ſhot deep, roſe high, and bid fair for manhood; but juſt as the cedar began to tower; and promiſed, ere long, to be the pride of the wood, and prince among the neighbouring trees;—behold! the axe is laid unto the root; the fatal blow ſtruck; and all its branching

* Iſa. lvii. 1.

ing honours tumbled to the duſt.—And did he fall alone? O! no: the hopes of his father that begat him, and the pleaſing proſpects of her that bare him, fell, and were cruſhed together with him.

DOUBTLESS, it would have pierced one's heart, to have beheld the tender parents, following the breathleſs boy, to his long home: perhaps, drowned in tears, and all overwhelmed with ſorrows, they ſtood, like weeping ſtatues, on this very ſpot.—Methinks, I ſee the deeply diſtreſſed mourners attending the ſad ſolemnity; how they wring their hands, and pour floods from their eyes!——Is it fancy! or do I really hear the paſſionate Mother in an agony of affliction, taking her final leave of the Darling of her ſoul? Dumb ſhe remained while the awful Obſequies were performing; dumb with grief, and leaning upon the partner of her woes. But now the inward anguiſh ſtruggles for vent; it grows too big to be repreſſed. She advances to the brink of the grave. All her ſoul is in her eyes. She faſtens one more look upon the dear doleful Object, before the pit ſhuts its mouth upon him. And as ſhe looks, ſhe cries;——in broken accents, interrupted by many a riſing ſob, ſhe cries,—"Farewel, my ſon! my ſon! my only beloved! would "to GOD I had died for thee!—farewel, my child! "and farewel, all my earthly happineſs!—I ſhall never more ſee good in the land of the living.—Attempt not to comfort me—I will go mourning all "my days, till my grey hairs come down with ſorrow, to the grave."

FROM this affecting repreſentation, let parents be convinced, how highly it concerns them to cultivate the Morals, and ſecure the immortal intereſt of their children.—If you really love the offſpring of your own bodies; if your bowels yearn over thoſe amiable pledges of conjugal endearment; O! ſpare no pains; give all diligence, I intreat you, to

"bring

" bring them up in the nurture and admonition of " the LORD." Then, may you have joy in their life, or conſolation in their death. If their Span is prolong'd; their unblamable and uſeful conduct will be the ſtaff of your age, and a balm for declining nature. Or, if the number of their years be cut off in the midſt, you may commit their remains to the duſt, with much the ſame comfortable expectations, and with infinitely more exalted views, than you ſend the ſurvivors to Places of genteel Education. You may commit them to the duſt, with chearing hopes of receiving them again to your arms, inexpreſſibly improved in every noble and endearing accompliſhment.

'Tis certainly a ſevere Trial; and much more afflictive, than I am able to imagine; to reſign a lovely blooming Creature, ſprung from your own loins, to the gloomy Receſſes of Corruption: after having been long dandled upon your knees; united to your affections by a thouſand ties of tenderneſs; and now become, both " the delight of " your eyes," and ſupport of your family: to have ſuch a one torn from your boſom, and thrown into darkneſs; doubtleſs, it muſt be like a Dagger in your hearts.——But O! how much more cutting to you, and confounding to the child, to have the ſoul ſeparated from God: and for ſhameful Ignorance, or early Impiety, conſigned over to a place of eternal torment! how would it aggravate your diſtreſs, and add a diſtracting Emphaſis to all your ſighs, if you ſhould follow the pale corpſe with theſe bitter reflections!—" This dear creature, though " long ago capable of knowing good from evil, is " gone out of the world, before it had learned " the great deſign of coming into it. A ſhort-lived, " momentary exiſtence, it received from me; but " no good Inſtructions, no holy admonitions, no- " thing to further its well-being in that everlaſting

" ſtate,

" ſtate, upon which it is now entered. The poor " Body is conſigned to the coffin, and carried out " to conſume away, in the cold and ſilent grave. " And what reaſon have I to ſuppoſe, that the pre- " cious Soul is in a better condition? May I not " juſtly fear, that, ſentenced by the righteous judge, " it is going, or gone away, into the pains of end- " leſs puniſhment?—Perhaps, while I am bewailing " its untimely Departure, it may be curſing, in out- " er darkneſs, that ever to be deplored, that moſt " calamitous Day, when it was born of ſuch a care- " leſs, ungodly parent, as I have been."

NOTHING, I think, but the gnawings of that worm which never dies, can equal the anguiſh of theſe ſelf-condemning thoughts. The Tortures of a Rack muſt be an eaſy ſuffering, compared with the Stings and Horror of ſuch a Remorſe.—How earneſtly do I wiſh, that, as many as are intruſted with the Management of Children, would take timely Care to prevent theſe intolerable ſcourges of conſcience; by endeavouring to conduct their minds into an early Knowledge of Chriſt, and a cordial Love of his truth!

ON this hand is lodged one, whoſe ſepulchral ſtone tells a moſt pitiable tale indeed! Well may the little Images, reclined over the ſleeping aſhes, hang down their heads with that penſive Air! None can conſider ſo mournful a ſtory, without feeling ſome touches of ſympathizing concern.———His Age twenty-eight; his death ſudden; himſelf cut down in the Prime of life, amidſt all the vivacity and vigour of Manhood; while " his breaſts were " full of milk, and his bones moiſtened with mar- " row."—Probably, he entertained no apprehen- ſions of the evil hour: And indeed, who could have ſuſpected, that ſo bright a Sun ſhould go down at Noon? To human appearance, his hill ſtood ſtrong; length of days ſeemed written in his ſanguine countenance;

tenance: he ſolaced himſelf with the proſpect of a long, long ſeries of earthly ſatisfactions.—When, lo! an unexpected ſtroke deſcends! deſcends from that mighty arm, which "overturneth the mountains by their roots; and cruſhes the imaginary "hero, * before the Moth;" as quickly, and more eaſily, than our fingers ſqueeze ſuch a feeble fluttering inſect to death.

PERHAPS, the nuptial Joys were all he thought on—Were not ſuch the breathings of his enamoured ſoul? "Yet a very little while, and I ſhall poſſeſs the utmoſt of my wiſhes: I ſhall call my "charmer mine; and, in her, enjoy whatever my "heart can crave."——In the midſt of ſuch inchanting views, had ſome faithful friend but ſoftly reminded him of an opening grave, and the end of all things: how unſeaſonable, would he have reckoned the admonition; and how impertinent, the perſon that adminiſtered it! Yet, though all warm with life, and rich in viſionary bliſs, he was even then tottering upon the brink of both.——O! dreadful viciſſitude!

* Job. iv. 19. לפני עש—Ad inſtar, ad modum Tineæ,—I retain this interpretation, both as it is moſt ſuitable to my purpoſe, and as it is patronized by ſome eminent commentators: eſpecially the celebrated Schultens. Though I cannot but give the preference to the opinion of a judicious friend, who would render the paſſage more literally, "Before the Face of a Moth:" making it to repreſent a creature ſo exceedingly frail, that even a moth, flying againſt it, may daſh it to pieces.—Which, beſides its cloſer correſpondence with the exact import of the Hebrew, preſents us with a much finer image of the moſt extreme imbecillity. For it certainly implies a far greater degree of weakneſs, to be cruſhed by the feeble flutter of a feeble creature, than only to be cruſhed as eaſily as that creature, by the hand of man.—The French verſion is very expreſſive and beautiful; a la Rencontre d'un Vermiſſeau.

ciſſitude! to have the bridal * Feſtivity turned into the funeral Solemnity. O! deplorable misfortune! to be ſhipwrecked even in the haven! and periſh in ſight of happineſs!—What a memorable proof is here of the Frailty of Man, in his beſt Eſtate! Look, O! look on this monument, ye Gay and Careleſs! attend to this date; and boaſt no more of to-morrow.

WHO can tell, but the Bride-maids, girded with gladneſs, had prepared the marriage-bed? had decked it with the richeſt covers, and dreſſed it in pillows of down? When——oh! truſt not in youth, or ſtrength, or in any thing mortal; for there is nothing certain, nothing to be depended on, beneath the unchangeable GOD—death, relentleſs death, is making him another kind of bed in the duſt of the earth. Unto this he muſt be conveyed, and not with a ſplendid proceſſion of joyous attendants: but ſtretched in the gloomy Hearſe, and followed by a train of mourners. On this he muſt take up a lonely lodging, nor ever be releaſed, "till the heavens are no more."——In vain does the conſenting Fair-one put on her ornaments, and expect her ſpouſe. Did ſhe not, like Siſera's mother, look out of the lattice: chide the delays of her beloved; and wonder "why his chariot was ſo long in coming?" little thinking, that the intended Bridegroom had for ever done with tranſitory

* A diſtreſs of this kind is painted in very affecting colours by Pliny in an Epiſtle to Marcellinus: "O triſte plane acerbumque Funus! O Morte ipſa Mortis Tempus indignius! Jam deſtinata erat egregio Juveni; jam electus Nuptiarum Dies; jam nos advocati. Quod Gaudium quo Mœrore mutatum eſt! Non poſſum exprimere Verbis, quantum Animo Vulnus acceperim, quum audivi Fundanum ipſum (ut multa luctuoſa Dolor invenit) præcipientem, quod in Veſtes, Margaritas, Gemmas fuerat erogaturus, hoc in Thura, & Unguenta, & Odores impenderetur." Plin. Lib. v. Epiſt. 26.

ſitory things! That now everlaſting cares employ his mind, without one ſingle remembrance of his lovely Lucinda!—Go, diſappointed virgin! Go, mourn the Uncertainty of all created bliſs! Teach thy ſoul to aſpire after a ſure and immutable Felicity! For the once gay and gallant Fidelio ſleeps in other embraces; even in the icy arms of death! forgetful, eternally forgetful, of the world and Thee.

HITHERTO, one is tempted to exclaim againſt the King of Terrors, and call him capriciouſly cruel. He ſeems, by beginning at the wrong end of the regiſter, to have inverted the laws of nature. Paſſing over the couch of decrepit age, he has nipped Infancy in its Bud; blaſted Youth in its Bloom; and torn up Manhood in its full Maturity. ——Terrible indeed are thoſe Providences, yet not unſearchable the counſels:

For us they ſicken, and for us they die *.

SUCH ſtrokes, muſt not only grieve the Relatives, but ſurpriſe the whole Neighbourhood. They ſound a powerful alarm to heedleſs dreaming mortals, and are intended as a Remedy for our Carnal Security. Such paſſing-bells inculcate loudly our LORD's admonition; "Take ye heed, watch, and pray; "for ye know not when the time is."——We nod, like intoxicated creatures, upon the very Verge of a tremendous Precipice. Theſe aſtoniſhing diſpenſations are the kind meſſengers of heaven; to rouſe us from our Supineneſs, and quicken us into timely circumſpection. I need not, ſurely, accommodate them with Language, nor act as their interpreter. Let every one's conſcience be awake, and this will appear their awful meaning——"O! ye "ſons of men, in the midſt of life you are in "death. No ſtate, no circumſtances, can aſ-

"certain

* Night-Thoughts.

" certain your preſervation a ſingle moment. So " ſtrong is the tyrant's arm, that nothing can re- " ſiſt its force; ſo unerring his aim, that nothing " can elude the blow: ſudden as lightning, ſome- " times, is his arrow launched; and wounds, and " kills, in the twinkling of an eye. Never promiſe " yourſelves ſafety in any expedient, but conſtant " preparation. The fatal ſhafts fly ſo promiſcuouſly, " that none can gueſs the next victim. Therefore, " Be ye always ready; for in ſuch an hour as ye " think not, the final ſummons cometh."

Be ye always ready: for in ſuch an hour as ye think not——Important admonition! Methinks, it reverberates from ſepulchre to ſepulchre; and addreſſes me, with line upon line, precept upon precept.——The reiterated warning, I acknowledge, is too needful; may co-operating grace render it effectual! The momentous truth, though worthy to be engraved, on the tables of a moſt tenacious memory; is ſlightly ſketched on the tranſient flow of paſſion. We ſee our neighbours fall; we turn pale at the ſhock; and feel a trembling dread. No ſooner are they removed from our ſight; but, driven in the whirl of buſineſs, or lulled in the languors of pleaſure, we forget the providence, and neglect its errand. The impreſſion made on our unſtable minds, is like the trace of an arrow, through the penetrated air; or the path of a keel, in the furrowed wave.—— Strange ſtupidity! To cure it, another Monitor beſpeaks me, from a neighbouring ſtone. It contains the narrative of a poor mortal, ſnatched from his friends, and hurried to the awful bar; without leiſure, either to take a laſt Farewel of the one, or to put up ſo much as a ſingle Prayer preparatory for the other: killed, according to the uſual expreſſion, by a ſudden ſtroke of Caſualty.

Was it then a random blow? Doubtleſs, the ſtroke came from an aiming, though inviſible Hand. God preſideth over the armies of heaven; God ruleth among the inhabitants of the earth; and God conducteth, what men call Chance. Nothing, nothing comes to paſs through a blind and undiſcerning fatality. If accidents happen; they happen according to the exact foreknowledge, and in conſequence of the determinate counſels, of Almighty wiſdom. The Lord, with whom are the iſſues of death, ſigned the Warrant, and gave the high Commiſſion: the ſeemingly fortuitous Diſaſter was only the Miniſter, appointed to execute the ſupreme decree. When the impious monarch was mortally wounded, it ſeemed to be a caſual ſhot. "A certain man drew a bow at a venture" *—At a venture, as he thought: but his hand was ſtrengthened, by an omnipotent aid; and the ſhaft levelled, by an unerring eye. So that, what we term Caſualty, is really Providence; accompliſhing deliberate deſigns, but concealing its own interpoſition—How comforting this reflection! How admirably adapted, to ſooth the throbbing anguiſh of the mourners, and compoſe their ſpirits into a quiet ſubmiſſion! How excellently ſuited, to diſſipate the fears of godly ſurvivors, and create a calm Intrepidity even amidſt innumerable perils!

O! how thin is the Partition, between this world and another! How ſhort the Tranſition, from time to eternity! The partition, nothing more than the breath in our noſtrils; and the tranſition may be made, in the twinkling of an eye——Poor Chremylus, I remember, aroſe from the diverſion of a card-table, and dropt into the dwellings of darkneſs.—One night, Corinna was all gaiety in her ſpirits, all finery in her apparel, at a magnificent ball: the next night, ſhe lay pale

* 1 Kings xxii. 34.

pale and ſtiff, an extended corpſe, and ready to be mingled with the mouldering dead——Young Atticus lived to ſee his ample and commodious ſeat compleated; but not to ſpend one joyous hour, under the ſtately roof. The ſaſhes were hung, to admit the day; but the maſter's eyes are cloſed in death. The chambers were furniſhed, to invite repoſe; but their lord reſts in the lower parts of the earth. The gardens were planted, and a thouſand elegant decorations deſigned; but their intended poſſeſſor, is gone down to "the place of ſkulls; gone down to the valley of the Shadow of Death."

WHILE I am recollecting, many, I queſtion not, are experiencing, the ſame tragical viciſſitude. The eyes of that ſublime being,——who ſits upon the circle of the earth, and views all its inhabitants with one comprehenſive glance,—even now behold many tents in affliction: Such affliction, as overwhelmed the Egyptians in that fatal night, when the deſtroying angel ſheathed his arrows in all the pride of their ſtrength.——Some, ſinking to the floor from their eaſy chair; and deaf even to the moſt piercing ſhrieks of their diſtracted relations.——Some, giving up the ghoſt, as they are reclined, all alone, under the ſhady arbour, to taſte the ſweets of the flowery ſcene——Some, as they ſail, aſſociated with a Party of Pleaſure, along the ſilver ſtream, while wine and muſic flow around.—Some intercepted, as they are returning home; and ſome interrupted, as they enter upon an important negociation.—Some arreſted, with the Gain of Injuſtice in their hands; and ſome, ſurpriſed in the immediate act of Lewdneſs, or of Cruelty.

LEGIONS, legions of diſaſters, ſuch as no Prudence can foreſee, no Care prevent, lie in wait to accompliſh our doom. A ſtarting Horſe may throw his rider; and at once daſh his body againſt the

the ſtones, and fling his ſoul into the inviſible world. A Stack of Chimneys may tumble into the ſtreet, and cruſh the unwary paſſenger under the ruins; or, even a Tile, dropping from the roof, may be as fatal as the fall of the whole ſtructure.—So frail, ſo very attenuated is the Thread of life, that it not only burſts before the Storm, but breaks even at a Breeze. The moſt common occurrences, thoſe from which we expect not the leaſt harm, may prove the weapons of our deſtruction. A grape-ſtone, a deſpicable fly, may be more mortal than Goliah, with all his formidable armour.—Nay, if GOD give command, our very Comforts bceome killing. The air we breathe, is our bane; and the food we eat, the vehicle of death.—That laſt enemy has unnumbered avenues for his approach. Yea; lies entrenched in our very boſom, and holds his fortreſs even in the ſeat of our life. The crimſon fluid, which diſtributes Health, is impregnated with the Seeds of Death *. Some unſeen impediment may obſtruct its paſſage, or ſome unknown violence may divert its courſe; in either of which caſes, it acts the part of a poiſonous draught, or a deadly ſtab. The body is a delicately fine machine; conſiſting of ten thouſand parts, playing ten thouſand motions; and a very ſmall Pin taken out, may diſconcert the whole frame; a ſingle Wheel clogged, may put a ſtop to all the vital movements.

SINCE then we are ſo liable to be diſpoſſeſſed of our earthly tabernacle, let us look upon ourſelves only as Tenants at Will; and hold ourſelves in perpetual readineſs, to depart at a moment's warning. Without ſuch an habitual holineſs, we are like wretches,

* As Man, perhaps, the moment of his Breath,
Receives the lurking Principle of Death.
The young diſeaſe, that muſt ſubdue at length,
Grows with his growth, and ſtrengthens with his ſtrength. Pope's Ethics.

wretches, that ſleep on the top of a maſt, while a horrid gulph yawns, or furious waves rage below. And where can be the peace, what the ſatisfaction, of ſuch a ſtate?——Whereas, a prepared condition will inſpire a cheerfulneſs of temper, not to be ruffled by every low vexation; and create a firmneſs of mind, not to be overthrown by the moſt threatening dangers. When the City is fortified with walls, furniſhed with proviſions, guarded by able and reſolute troops; what have the Inhabitants to fear? what may they not enjoy? So, juſt ſo, or rather by a much ſurer band, are connected the real taſte of life, and the conſtant thought of death.

I SAID, Our very Comforts may become killing.—And ſee the truth inſcribed by the hand, ſealed with the ſignet, of fate. The marble, which graces yonder pillar, informs me, that, near it, are depoſited the remains of my valuable friend Sophronia; who died in Child-bed.—How often does this calamity happen! The branch ſhoots; but the ſtem withers. The babe ſprings to light; but ſhe that bare him, breathes her laſt. She gives life, but (O pitiable conſideration!) gives it at the expence of her own; and becomes, at once, a Mother and a Corpſe.——Or elſe, perhaps, ſhe expires in ſevere pangs, and is herſelf a tomb for her infant; while the melancholy complaint of a monarch's woe, is the epitaph for them both: The Children are come to the Birth, and there is not Strength to bring forth *—Leſs to be lamented, in my opinion, this misfortune than the other. Better, for the tender ſtranger, to be ſtopped in the porch; than to enter, only to converſe with affliction. Better, to find a grave in the womb; than to be expoſed on a hazardous world, without the guardian

* Iſa. xxxvii. 3.

guardian of its infantile years, without the faithful guide of its youth.

THIS monument is diſtinguiſhed by its finer materials, and more delicate appendages. It ſeems to have taken its model from an affluent hand; directed by a generous heart; that thought it could never do enough for the deceaſed.—It ſeems alſo, to exhibit an emblematical Picture of Sophronia's perſon and accompliſhments. Is her beauty, or more than beauty, her white-robed innocence, repreſented by the ſnowy Colour? the Surface, ſmoothly poliſhed, like her amiable temper, and engaging manners: the Whole elegantly adorned, without either extravagant pomp, or ſordid negligence; like her undiſſembled goodneſs, remote from the leaſt oſtentation, yet in all points exemplary.—But ah! how vain, were all theſe endearing charms! how vain, the luſtre of thy ſprightly eye! how vain, the bloom of thy bridal youth! how vain, the honours of thy ſuperior birth! how unable to ſecure the lovely poſſeſſor, from the ſavage Violence of death!——How ineffectual, the univerſal eſteem of thy acquaintance; the fondneſs of thy tranſported huſband; or even the ſpotleſs integrity of thy character, to prolong thy ſpan, or procure thee a ſhort reprieve!—The concurrence of all theſe circumſtances, reminds me of thoſe beautiful and tender lines,

How lov'd, how valu'd once, avails Thee not;
To whom related or by whom begot.
A Heap of duſt alone remains of Thee:
'Tis all THOU art!——and all the PROUD
ſhall be! * Pope's Miſcell.

YET,

* Theſe verſes are inſcribed on a ſmall, but very elegant monument, lately erected in the great church at Northampton: which, in the Hieroglyphical decorations correſponds

YET, though unable to divert the ſtroke, chriſtianity is ſovereign to pluck out the ſting, of death.

correſponds with the deſcription introduced on this ſubject; and particularly, that it is dedicated to the memory of an amiable Woman, Mrs. ANNE STONHOUSE; the excellent wife of my worthy friend, Dr. STONHOUSE: who has had the diſtreſs, to ſee all the efforts of that healing art, to which I, and ſo many others, have been greatly indebted, failing in their attempts to preſerve a life much dearer to him than his own.

Nec proſunt Domino, quæ proſunt omnibus, Artes.

No longer his all-healing art avails,
But ev'ry remedy its maſter fails.

He has, however, ſought ſome conſolation, in the midſt of this tender anguiſh; by teaching the ſepulchral Marble to ſpeak, at once, his eſteem for her memory, and his veneration for that Religion, which ſhe ſo eminently adorned; by ſumming up her character, in that conciſe, but comprehenſive ſentence. A SINCERE CHRISTIAN. Conciſe enough, to be the motto for a mourning ring; yet as comprehenſive, as the moſt inlarged ſphere of perſonal, ſocial, and religious worth. For, whatſoever things are pure; whatſoever things are lovely; whatſoever things are of good report; are they not all included in that grand and noble aggregate, A ſincere Chriſtian?

The firſt lines, conſidered in ſuch a connection, are wonderfully plaintive and pathetic;

How lov'd, how valu'd once, avails thee not;
To Whom related, or by Whom begot.

They ſound, at leaſt in my ears, like the voice of ſorrow, mingled with admiration. The ſpeaker ſeems to have been loſt, for a while, in melancholy contemplation; ſuddenly breaks out into this abrupt encomium, then, melts into tears, and can proceed no farther. Yet, in this caſe, how eloquent is ſilence! while it hints

death. Is not this the ſilent language of thoſe lamps that burn, that heart which flames, thoſe palms

hints the univerſal eſteem which attended, the ſuperiority of birth which diſtinguiſhed, the deceaſed; it expreſſes, beyond all the pomp of words, the yearning affection and heart-felt diſtreſs of the Huſband. Amidſt a group of monumental marbles, which are laviſh of their panegyric; this, I think, reſembles that incomparable addreſs of the painter, who, having placed, round a beautiful expiring virgin, her friends in all the agonies of grief; repreſented the unequalled anguiſh of the Father, with far greater livelineſs and ſtrength, or rather with an inexpreſſible emphaſis, by drawing a veil over his face.

If the laſt lines are a wide departure from the beaten track of our modern epitaphs, and the very reverſe of their high-flown compliments,

A heap of duſt alone remains of Thee!
'Tis all THOU art!—and all the PROUD ſhall be!

they are not without their precedent, and that of the moſt conſummate kind; ſince they breathe the very ſpirit of that ſacred elegy, in which all the heart of the hero and the friend ſeem to be diſſolved; How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war periſhed! 2 Sam. i. 27.—They remind the reader, of that awful leſſon, which was originally dictated by the ſupreme wiſdom; Duſt thou art, and unto duſt thou ſhalt return, Gen. iii. 19.——They inculcate, with all the force of the moſt convincing evidence, that ſolemn admonition delivered by the prophet: "Ceaſe ye from man, whoſe breath is in his noſtrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of?" Iſa. ii. 22.

That no reader, however inattentive, might miſtake the ſenſe and deſign of this part of the fourth line,

'Tis ALL Thou art!———

palms that flouriſh, that crown which glitters in the well imitated and gilded marble? Do they not, to the diſcerning eye, deſcribe the vigilance of her faith, the fervency of her devotion, her victory over the world, and the celeſtial diadem which the LORD, the righteous judge, ſhall give her at that day? †

How happy the huſband, in ſuch a ſharer of his bed, and partner of his fortunes! Their inclinations were nicely tuned uniſons, and all their converſation was harmony. How ſilken the yoke to ſuch a pair, and what bleſſings were twiſted with ſuch bands? Every joy was heightened, and every care alleviated. Nothing ſeemed wanting to conſummate their bliſs, but a hopeful progeny riſing around them.—That they might ſee themſelves multiplied in their little-ones, ſee their mingled graces transfuſed into their offspring, and feel the glow of their affection augmented, by being reflected from their children. "Grant us this gift, ſaid their "united

it is guarded above and beneath.—Above, is an expanded book, that ſeems to be waved, with an air of triumph, over the emblem of death; which we cannot but ſuppoſe to be the volume of inſpiration, as it exhibits a kind of abridgment of its whole contents, in thoſe animated words, "BE YE NOT SLOTHFUL, BUT FOLLOWERS OF THEM, WHO THRO' FAITH AND PATIENCE INHERIT THE PROMISES," Heb. vi. 12.—Beneath, that every part might be pregnant with inſtruction, are thoſe ſtriking reflections, worthy the deep conſideration of the higheſt proficient in knowledge and piety, yet obvious to the underſtanding of the moſt untaught reader; LIFE HOW SHORT! ETERNITY HOW LONG!—May my ſoul learn the forcible purport of this ſhort leſſon, in her contracted ſpan of time! and all eternity will not be too long to rejoice in having learned it.

† 2 Tim. iv. 8.

"united prayers, and our ſatisfactions are crown-
"ed; we requeſt no more."

ALAS! how blind are mortals to future events! How unable to diſcern what is really good! * Give me children, ſaid Rachel, or elſe I die.† An ardour of impatience altogether unbecoming; and as miſtaken as unbecoming. She dies, not by the diſappointment, but by the accompliſhment of her deſire. If children are to parents like a flowery chaplet, whoſe beauties bloſſom with ornament, and whoſe odours breathe delight; death, or ſome fell misfortune, may find means to entwine themſelves with the lovely wreath. Whenever our ſouls are poured out with paſſionate importunity after an inferior acquiſition, it may be truly ſaid, in the words of our divine maſter, Ye know not what ye aſk. — Does providence withhold the thing that we long for? It denies in mercy; and only withholds the occaſion of our miſery, if not the inſtrument of our ruin. With a ſickly appetite, we often loathe what is wholeſome, and linger after our bane. Where imagination dreams of unmingled ſweets; there, experience frequently finds the bitterneſs of woe.

THEREFORE, may we covet immoderately, neither this, nor that form of earthly felicity; but refer the whole of our condition to the choice of unerring wiſdom. May we learn to renounce our own will, and be ready to make a ſacrifice of our warmeſt wiſhes, whenever they run counter to the good pleaſure of GOD: for, indeed, as to obey his laws, is to be perfectly free; ſo, to reſign

* Neſcia mens hominum fati, ſortiſque futuræ!
Turno tempus erit, magno cum optaverit emptum,
Intactum Pallanta; & cum ſpolia iſta diemque
Oderit. ——— Virg.

† Gen. xxx. 1.

ourſelves to his diſpoſal, is to eſtabliſh our own Happineſs, and to be ſecure from fear of evil.

HERE, a ſmall and plain ſtone is placed upon the ground. Purchaſed, one would imagine, from the little fund, and formed by the hand of frugality itſelf. Nothing coſtly: not one decoration added: only a very ſhort inſcription; and that ſo effaced, as to be ſcarcely intelligible.—Was the depoſitary unfaithful to its truſt? Or were the letters worn by the frequent reſort of the ſurviving family, to mourn over the grave, and revive the remembrance of a moſt valuable and beloved relative?—For I perceive, upon a cloſer inſpection, that it covers the remains of a father. A religious Father; ſnatched from his growing offſpring, before they were ſettled in the world, or ſo much as their principles fixed by a thorough education.

THIS, ſure, is the moſt complicated woe that has hitherto come under our conſideration. The ſolemnities of ſuch a dying chamber are ſome of the moſt melting and melancholy ſcenes imaginable. —There lies the affectionate huſband, the indulgent parent, the faithful friend, and the generous maſter. He lies in the laſt extremities, and on the very point of diſſolution. Art has done its all. The raging diſeaſe mocks the power of medicine. It haſtens with reſiſtleſs impetuoſity, to execute its dreadful errand, to rend aſunder the ſilver cord of life, and the more delicate tye of mutual love.

A Servant or two, from a revering diſtance, catch many a wiſhful look, and condole their honoured maſter in the language of ſighs. The condeſcending mildneſs with which he was wont to give, and the dutiful alacrity with which they always received, his eaſy commands, now imbitter their grief, and make it trickle plentifully down their honeſt cheeks.——His Friends, who have ſo often gladdened his mind with their enlivening converſe, are

are miſerable comforters. A ſympathizing and mourning pity is all the relief they are able to contribute; unleſs it be augmented by their ſilent prayers for the divine ſuccour, and a word of conſolation ſuggeſted from the ſcripture.§—Thoſe poor innocents, the children, crowd around the bed; drowned in tears, and almoſt frantic with grief, they ſob out their little ſouls, and paſſionately cry; "Will he leave us? "leave us in a helpleſs condition! leave us to an in- "jurious world!"—Theſe ſeparate ſtreams are all united in the diſtreſſed ſpouſe, and overwhelm her breaſt with a tide of ſorrows. In her, the lover weeps, the wife mourns, and all the mother yearns. To her the loſs is beyond meaſure aggravated, by months and years of delightful ſociety, and exalted friendſhip. Where, alas! can ſhe find ſuch cordial affection, or repoſe ſuch unreſerved confidence? Where find ſo diſcreet a counſellor; ſo improving an example; and a guardian ſo ſedulouſly attentive to the intereſts of herſelf and her children? See! how ſhe hangs over the languiſhing bed; moſt tenderly ſolicitous to ſooth the bitter agonies of her dearer ſelf; and, if it were poſſible, lengthen out a life, on which her own comfort, and the ſupport of her little ones, principally depend. Behold her hands, trembling under direful apprehenſions, yet wiping the cold dews from the livid cheeks; ſometimes ſtaying the ſinking head on her gentle arms, or reſting it on her compaſſionate boſom.

§ Texts of ſcripture, proper for ſuch an occaſion; containing promiſes——of ſupport under affliction, Lam. iii. 32. Heb. xii. 6. 2 Cor. iv. 17.——of pardon, Iſai. liii. 5. Iſai. i. 18. 1 John ii. 1. 2. Acts x. 43.——of juſtification, Rom. v. 9. Rom. viii. 33, 34. 2 Cor. v. 21.—of victory over death, Pſalm xxiii. 4. Pſalm lxxiii. 26. Hoſ. xiii. 14. 1 Cor. xv. 56, 57.—of a happy Reſurrection, John vi. 40. 2 Cor. v. 1. Rev. vii. 16, 17.

See! how ſhe gazes with a ſpeechleſs ardour on the pale countenance and meagre features. While all her ſoft paſſions beat unutterable fondneſs, and her whole ſoul is wounded with exquiſite anguiſh.

THE Sufferer, all patient and adoring, yields to the divine will; and, by ſubmiſſion, becomes ſuperior to his affliction. He is ſenſibly touched with the diſconſolate ſtate of his attendants; and pierced with an anxious concern for the wife, who will ſoon be a deſtitute widow; for the children, who will ſoon be fatherleſs orphans. Yet, "though caſt down, not in "deſpair." He is greatly refreſhed by his truſt in the everlaſting covenant, of his hope of approaching glory. Religion gives a dignity even to diſtreſs. At each interval of eaſe, he comforts his very comforters; and ſuffers with all the majeſty of woe.

THE Soul, juſt going to abandon the tottering clay, collects all her force, and exerts her laſt efforts. The good man raiſes himſelf on his pillow; extends a kind hand to his ſervants, which is bathed in tears; takes an affecting farewel of his friends; claſps his wife in a feeble embrace; kiſſes the dear pledges of their mutual love; and then pours all that remains of life and of ſtrength into the following words; — "I die, my dear Chil- "dren; but GOD, the everlaſting GOD, will be "with you.—Though you loſe an earthly parent, "you have a father in heaven, who lives for ever- "more.—Nothing, nothing but an unbelieving "heart, and irreligious life, can ever ſeparate you "from the regards of his Providence—from the "endearments of his love."

HE could go no farther. His heart was full; but utterance failed.—After a ſhort pauſe, prompted by affectionate zeal, with difficulty, great difficulty, he added;—"You, the dear Partner of "my ſoul, you are now the only protector of "our

"our orphans.—I leave you under a weight of cares. "—But GOD, who defendeth the cauſe of the wi- "dow; GOD, whoſe promiſe is faithfulneſs and "truth; God hath ſaid, I will never leave thee, "nor forſake thee.†—This revives my drooping ſpi- "rits; let this ſupport the wife of my boſom.—— "And now, O Father of compaſſions, into thy hands "I commend my ſpirit—— encouraged by thy pro- "miſed goodneſs, I leave my fatherleſs"——

HERE he fainted; fell back upon the bed, and lay for ſome minutes bereft of his ſenſes. As a taper, upon the very point of extinction, is ſometimes ſuddenly rekindled, and leaps into a quivering flame: ſo life, before it totally expired, gave a parting ſtruggle, and once more looked abroad from the opening eye-lids.——He would fain have ſpoke, fain have uttered the ſentence he began. More than once he eſſayed; but the organs of ſpeech were become like a broken veſſel; and nothing but the obſtructing phlegm rattled in his throat. His aſpect, however, ſpoke affection inexpreſſible. With all the father, all the huſband, ſtill living in his looks; he takes one more view of the dear creatures, whom he had often beheld with a paternal triumph. He turns his dying eyes on that beloved woman, whom he never beheld but with a glow of delight. Fixed in this poſture, amidſt ſmiles of love, and under a gleam of heaven, they ſhine out their laſt.

UPON this, the ſilent ſorrow burſts into loud laments. They weep, and refuſe to be comforted. Till ſome length of time had given vent to the exceſs of paſſion; and the conſolations of religion, had ſtaunched their bleeding woes. Then the afflicted family ſearch for the ſentence, which fell unfiniſhed from thoſe loved, thoſe venerable and

† Heb. xiii. 5.

pious lips. They find it recorded by the prophet Jeremiah, containing the direction of infinite wisdom, and the promise of almighty goodness; "Leave thy fatherless children; I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in me."§—This now is the comfort of their life, and the joy of their heart. They treasure it up in their memories as a most valuable legacy. They rely upon it as an inexhaustible fund to supply all their necessities, and to ensure the blessing of success on all their honest labours. They are rich, they are happy, in this sacred pledge of divine favour. They fear no evil, they want no good, because GOD is their guide, and their guardian GOD.

No sooner turned from one memento of my own, and memorial of another's decease, but a second, a third, a long succession of these melancholy monitors croud upon my sight. ‡——That which has fixed my observation, is one of a more grave and sable aspect than the former. I suppose it preserves the relics of a more aged person. One would conjecture, that he made somewhat of a figure in his station among the living, as his monument does among the funeral marbles. Let me draw near, and enquire of the stone, "Who, or "what, is beneath its surface?"——I am informed, he was once the owner of a considerable estate, which was much improved by his own application and management; that he left the world in the busy period of life, advanced a little beyond the meridian.—Probably, replied my musing mind, one of those indefatigable drudges, who rise early, late take rest, and eat the bread of carefulness; not to secure the loving kindness of the LORD; not to make provision for any reasonable necessity; but only to amass together ten thousand times more than

§ Jerem. xlix. 11.
‡ ——————Plurima mortis imago. Virg.

than they can poſſibly uſe. Did he not lay ſchemes for enlarging his fortune, and aggrandizing his family? Did he not purpoſe to join field to field, and add houſe to houſe; till his Poſſeſſions were almoſt as vaſt, as his Deſires? that, then he, would * ſit down, and enjoy what he had acquired; breathe a while from his toilſome purſuit of things temporal, and, perhaps, think a little of things eternal.

But ſee the Folly of Worldly Wiſdom! How ſilly, how childiſh, is the ſagacity of (what is called) manly and maſterly prudence; when it contrives more ſolicitouſly for TIME, than it provides for ETERNITY! How ſtrangely infatuated are thoſe ſubtile heads; that weary themſelves, in concerting meaſures for Shadows of a Day; and ſcarce beſtow a thought, on everlaſting Realities!—when every wheel moves on ſmoothly; when all the well-diſpoſed deſigns are ripening apace for execution; and the long-expected criſis of enjoyment ſeems to approach; behold! God from on high laughs at the Babel-builder; death touches the labour'd bubble, and immediately it breaks. The cobweb, moſt finely ſpun indeed, but more eaſily diſlodged, is ſwept away in an inſtant; and all the abortive projects are buried, in the ſame grave, with their projector. So true is that verdict, which the wiſdom from above paſſes, on theſe ſucceſsful unfortunates: "They walk in a vain ſhadow, and diſquiet themſelves in vain. †"

Speak, ye, that attended ſuch a one in his laſt minutes; ye, that heard his expiring ſentiments; did he not cry out, in the language of diſappointed ſenſuality, "O death! how terrible is thy ap-

 "proach,

* ——— Hac mente laborem
Seſe ferre, ſenes ut in otia tuta recedant,
Aiunt, cum ſibi ſint conjecta cibaria. Hor.

† Pſalm xxxix. 6.

" proach, to a man that has devoted himſelf to " the purſuit of preſent ſatisfactions, and exerciſed " no concern for the never-ending hereafter! " where, alas! is the profit, where the comfort, " of entering deep into the knowledge, and of be- " ing dexterous in the diſpatch, of earthly affairs; " ſince I have, all the while, neglected the one " thing needful? O deſtructive miſtake! I have " been attentive to every inferior intereſt; I have " laid myſelf out on the trifles of a moment: but " have diſregarded heaven; have forgot eternal " ages! oh! that my days"—— here, he was going on to breathe ſome fruitleſs wiſhes; or to form, I know not what, ineffectual reſolutions. But, a ſudden convulſion ſhook his nerves; diſabled his tongue; and in leſs than an hour, diſſolved his frame.

May the children of this world be warned, by the dying words of an unhappy brother; and gather advantage, from his misfortune. Why ſhould they pant, with impatient ardour, after white and yellow earth, as if the univerſe did not afford ſufficient, for every one to take a little? why ſhould they lade themſelves with thick clay, when they are to " run " for an incorruptible crown, and preſs towards " the prize of their high calling?" why ſhould they over-load the veſſel, in which their everlaſting ALL is embarked; or fill their arms with ſuperfluities, when they are to ſwim for their lives? yet, ſo prepoſterous is the conduct of thoſe perſons, who are all induſtry, to heap up an abundance of the wealth which periſheth; but are ſcarce ſo much as faintly deſirous of being rich towards GOD.

O! that we may walk from henceforth through all theſe glittering toys, at leaſt with a wiſe indifference, if not with a ſuperior diſdain! having enough for the conveniencies of life, let us only accommodate ourſelves with things below, and lay up

up our treaſures in the regions above.—Whereas, if we indulge an anxious concern, or laviſh an inordinate care, on any tranſitory poſſeſſions; we ſhall rivet them to our affections with ſo firm an union, that the utmoſt ſeverity of pain muſt attend the ſeparating ſtroke. By ſuch an eager attachment, to what will certainly be raviſhed from us; we ſhall only inſure to ourſelves accumulated anguiſh, againſt the agonizing hour: we ſhall plant, aforehand, our dying pillow with thorns*.

Some, I perceive, arrived at threeſcore years and ten, before they made their exit; nay, ſome few reſigned not their breath, till they had numbered fourſcore revolving harveſts.——Theſe, I would hope, "remembered their Creator in the days "of their youth;" before their ſtrength become labour and ſorrow; before that low ebb of languiſhing nature, when the keepers of the houſe tremble, and thoſe that look out of the windows are darkened†: when, even the lighting down of the Graſhopper, is a burden on the bending ſhoulders; and deſire itſelf fails in the liſtleſs, inactive, lethargic ſoul:——Before thoſe heavy hours come, and thoſe tireſome moments draw nigh; in which, there is too much reaſon to ſay, "We have no pleaſure in them: "no improvement from them."

In

* Lean not on earth; 'twill pierce thee to the heart;
A broken reed at beſt, but oft a ſpear;
On its ſharp point peace bleeds, and hope expires.
Night Thoughts, No. III.

† Eccleſ. xii. 3, 5. I need not remind my reader, that, by the former of theſe figurative expreſſions, is ſignified the enervated ſtate of the hands and arms; by the latter, the dimneſs of the eyes, or the total loſs of ſight: that, taken in connection with other parts of the chapter, they exhibit, in a ſeries of elegant ſimilitudes, a deſcription of the various infirmities, which accompany old age.

If their lamps were unfurniſhed with oil, how unfit muſt they be, in ſuch decrepit circumſtances, to go to the market, and buy!* For, beſides a variety of diſorders, ariſing from the enfeebled conſtitution; their corruptions muſt be ſurpriſingly ſtrengthened, by ſuch a long courſe of irreligion. Evil habits muſt have ſtruck the deepeſt root; muſt have twiſted themſelves with every fibre of the heart; and be as thoroughly ingrained in the diſpoſition, as the ſoot in the Ethiopian's complexion, or the ſpots in the Leopard's ſkin. If ſuch a one, under ſuch diſadvantages, ſurmounts all the difficulties, that lie in his way to glory; it muſt be a great and mighty ſalvation indeed. If ſuch a one eſcapes deſtruction, and is ſaved at the laſt, it muſt, without all peradventure, be—ſo as by fire†.

This is the ſeaſon, that ſtands in need of comfort, and is very improper to enter upon the conflict. The huſbandman ſhould now be putting in his ſickle, or eating the fruit of his labours; not beginning to break up the ground, or ſcatter the ſeed. —Nothing, 'tis true, is impoſſible with God: he ſaid, "let there be Light, and there was Light:" inſtantaneous light, diffuſed, as quick as thought, through all the diſmal dominion of primeval darkneſs. At his command, a leproſy of the longeſt continuance, and utmoſt inveteracy, departs in a moment. He can, in the greatneſs of his ſtrength, quicken the wretch, that has lain dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, not four days only, but fourſcore years. —Yet truſt not, O truſt not, a point of ſuch inexpreſſible importance, to ſo dreadful an uncertainty. God may ſuſpend his power; may withdraw his help: may ſwear in his wrath, that ſuch abuſers of his long-ſuffering ſhall "never enter into his "reſt."

Ye

* Matt. xxv. 9. † 1 Cor. iii. 15.

YE therefore, that are vigorous in health, and blooming in years, improve the precious opportunity. Improve your golden hours, to the nobleſt of all purpoſes: ſuch as may render you meet, for the inheritance of ſaints in light; and aſcertain your title, to a ſtate of immortal youth; to a crown of eternal glory *.——Stand not all the prime of your day, idle; trifle no longer with the offers of this immenſe felicity; but make haſte, and delay not the time, to keep GOD's commandments. While you are loitering in a gay inſenſibility, death may be bending his bow, and marking you out for ſpeedy victims.——Not long ago, I happened to 'ſpy a thoughtleſs Jay. The poor bird was idly buſied in dreſſing his pretty plumes, or hopping careleſly from ſpray to ſpray. A ſportſman, coming by, obſerves the feathered rover. Immediately he lifts the tube, and levels his blow. Swifter than a whirlwind, flies the leaden death; and, in a moment, lays the ſilly creature, breathleſs on the ground. ——Such, ſuch, may be the fate of the man, who has a fair occaſion of obtaining grace to-day, and wantonly poſtpones the improvement of it, till to-morrow. He may be cut off, in the midſt of his folly,

* May I be permitted to recommend, as a treaſure of ineſtimable value, and a treatiſe particularly appoſite to my ſubject, Dr. LUCAS's inquiry after happineſs? That part eſpecially, which diſplays the method and enumerates the advantages, of improving life, or living much in a little time. Chap. III. p. 158 of the 6th edit.—An author; in whom the gentleman, the ſcholar, and the chriſtian, are moſt happily united.—A performance; which, in point of ſolid argument, unaffected piety, and a vein of thought amazingly fertile, has, perhaps, no ſuperior.—Nor can I wiſh my reader a more refined pleaſure, or a more ſubſtantial happineſs; than that of having the ſentiments of this entertainiug and pathetic writer, wove into the very texture of his heart.

folly, and ruined for ever, while he is dreaming of being wiſe hereafter.

SOME, no doubt, came to this their laſt retreat, full of piety, and full of days; "as a ſhock of "corn, ripe with age, and laden with plenty, "cometh in, in his ſeaſon *."——These were children of light, and wiſe in their generation; wiſe towards GOD; wiſe for their moſt important concerns; and wiſe for that bliſsful eternity, they now inherit—Rich alſo they were, more honourably and permanently rich, than all the votaries of Mammon. The wealth of the one has made itſelf wings, and is irrecoverably gone: while the wretched acquirers are tranſmitted, to that place of penury and pain; where not ſo much as one drop of water is allowed, to cool their ſcorched tongues. Whereas, the ſtores of the other ſtill abide with them, will never depart from them; but make them glad for ever and ever, in the city of their GOD. Their treaſures were ſuch, as no created power could take away; ſuch as none but infinite beneficence can beſtow; and (Oh! comfortable to conſider!) ſuch as I, and every indigent longing ſinner, may obtain; treaſures of heavenly knowledge, and ſaving faith; treaſures of atoning blood, and imputed righteouſneſs.

HERE † lie their bodies, in "peaceable habitati-
"ons

* Job v. 26.

† Some, I know, are offended at our burying corpſes within the church, and exclaim againſt it, as a very great impropriety and indecency: but this, I imagine, proceeds from an exceſſive and miſtaken delicacy. Let proper care be taken to ſecure from injury, the foundations of the building, and to prevent the exhalation of any noxious effluvia from the putrifying fleſh; and I cannot diſcover any inconveniencies attending this practice.

The notion, that noiſome carcaſes (as they are called) are very unbecoming a place, conſecrated to religious

" ons and quiet reſting places." Here they have thrown off every burden, and are eſcaped from every

gious purpoſes, ſeems to be founded on an antiquated Jewiſh canon; whereby it was declared, that a dead body imparted defilement to the perſon, who touched it; and polluted the ſpot, where it was lodged. On which account, the Jews were ſcrupulouſly careful to have their ſepulchres built at a diſtance from their houſes; and made it a point of conſcience, not to ſuffer any cemeteries to ſubſiſt in the city. But as this was a rite purely ceremonial, it ſeems to be entirely ſuperſeded by the goſpel diſpenſation.

I cannot forbear thinking, that, under the chriſtian œconomy, there is a propriety and uſefulneſs in the cuſtom—uſefulneſs, becauſe it muſt render our ſolemn aſſemblies more venerable and awful. For, when we walk over the duſt of our friends, or kneel upon the aſhes of our relations; this awakening circumſtance muſt ſtrike a lively impreſſion of our own mortality. And what conſideration can be more effectual, to make us ſerious and attentive in hearing, earneſt and importunate in praying?—As for the fitneſs of the uſage, it ſeems perfectly ſuitable to the deſign of thoſe ſacred edifices. They are ſet apart for God, not only to receive his worſhippers, but to preſerve the furniture for holy miniſtrations, and what is, in a peculiar manner, appropriated to the divine Majeſty. And are not the bodies of the ſaints, the Almighty's property? Were they not once the objects of his tender love? Are they not ſtill the ſubjects of his ſpecial care? Has he not given commandments concerning the bones of his elect; and charged the ocean and enjoined the grave, to keep them till that day? Are they not precious in his eſteem? So precious, that when mountains, bright with gems, or rich with Mines, are abandoned to the devouring flames; theſe ſhall be reſcued from the fiery ruin; theſe ſhall be tranſlated into JEHOVAH's kingdom; and conjointly with the ſoul, made " his jewels," made " his " peculiar treaſure;" made to ſhine as the brightneſs of the firmament, and as the ſtars for ever and ever.

Is

every ſnare. The head aches no more; the eye forgets to weep; the fleſh is no longer racked with acute, nor pines away under lingering diſtempers. Here they receive a final releaſe from pain, and an everlaſting diſcharge from ſorrows. Here, danger never threatens them, with her terrifying alarms; but tranquillity ſoftens their couch, and ſafety guards their repoſe.—Reſt then, ye precious relics, within this hoſpitable gloom; reſt in gentle ſlumbers, till the laſt trumpet ſhall give the welcome ſignal, and ſound aloud, through all your ſilent manſions, "Ariſe, "ſhine; for your light is come, and the glory of "the Lord is riſen upon you‡."

To

Is not CHRIST the LORD of our bodies? Are they not bought with a price? Bought, not with corruptible things, ſilver and gold; but with his divine blood. And if the bleſſed Jeſus purchaſed the Redemption of our bodies, at ſo infinitely dear a rate; can it enter into our hearts to conceive, that he ſhould diſlike to have them repoſed, under his own habitation?———Once more; are not the bodies of the faithful, temples of the Holy Ghoſt? And is there not, upon this ſuppoſition, an apparent propriety, rather than the leaſt indecorum, in remitting theſe temples of fleſh, to the temples made with hands? They are veſſels of honour; inſtruments of righteouſneſs; and, even when broken by death, like the fragments of a golden bowl, are valuable, are worthy to be laid up in the ſafeſt, moſt honourable repoſitories.

Upon the whole, ſince the Lord Jeſus has purchaſed them, at the expence of his blood; and the bleſſed ſpirit has honoured them, with his in-dwelling preſence, ſince they are right dear in the ſight of the adorable trinity, and undoubted heirs of a glorious immortality: why ſhould it be thought a thing improper, to admit them to a tranſient reſt, in their heavenly father's houſe? Why may they not lie down and ſleep, in the outer courts, ſince they are ſoon to be introduced into the inmoſt manſions of everlaſting honour and joy?

‡ Iſai. lx. 1.

To theſe, how calm was the Evening of Life? In what a ſmiling ſerenity, did their ſun go down! When their fleſh and their heart failed, how reviving was the remembrance of an all-ſufficient redeemer; once dying for their ſins, now riſen again for their juſtification! How chearing the well-grounded hope of pardon for their tranſgreſſions, and peace with GOD, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD! How did this aſſuage the agonies, and ſweeten the bitterneſs of death?—Where now is Wealth, with all her golden mountains? Where is honour, with her proud trophies of renown? Where are all the vain Pomps of a deluded World? Can they adminiſter any ſupport in this laſt extremity? Can they compoſe the affrighted thoughts, or buoy up the departing ſoul amidſt all the pangs of diſſolution?—The followers of the Lamb ſeem pleaſed and triumphant, even at their laſt gaſp. "GOD's everlaſting Arms are underneath †" their fainting heads. His ſpirit whiſpers peace and conſolation to their conſciences. In the ſtrength of theſe heavenly ſuccours, they quit the field of battle, not Captives, but Conquerors; with "hopes full of immortality."

AND now they are gone.—The ſtruggles of reluctant nature are over. The body ſleeps in death; the ſoul launches into the inviſible ſtate.——But, who can imagine the delightful ſurprize, when they find themſelves ſurrounded by guardian Angels, inſtead of weeping Friends? How ſecurely do they wing their way, and paſs through unknown worlds, under the conduct of theſe celeſtial Guides!——The Vale of Tears is quite loſt. Farewel for ever the realms of woe, and rage of malignant beings! They arrive on the Frontiers of inexpreſſible Felicity. They "are come to the city of the living God;" while a voice, ſweeter than muſic in her ſofteſt ſtrains;

† Deut. xxxiii. 27.

ſtrains; ſweet as the harmony of hymning ſeraphims; congratulates their Arrival, and beſpeaks their Admiſſion: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; "and be ye lift up, ye everlaſting doors; that the "heirs of glory may enter in."

HERE, then, let us leave "the Spirits and Souls "of the Righteous;" eſcaped from an entangling Wilderneſs, and received into a Paradiſe of delights! eſcaped from the territories of diſquietude, and ſettled in regions of unmoleſted ſecurity *! Here they ſit down with Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of his father. Here, they mingle with an innumerable company of angels, and rejoice around the Throne of the Lamb; rejoice in the Fruition of preſent felicity, and in the aſſured Expectation of an inconceivable Addition to their Bliſs; "when GOD "ſhall call the heavens from above, and the Earth, "that he may judge his People."——

"FOOLS accounted their life madneſs, and their "end to be without honour: but, they are num-"bered among the children of GOD, and their lot, "their diſtinguiſhed and eternal lot, is among the "Saints †!" However, therefore, an undiſcerning world may deſpiſe, and a profane world vilify, the truly religious; be this the ſupreme, the invariable deſire of my heart! "Let me live the life, and "die

* Seneca's reflections upon the happy ſtate of holy ſouls, delivered from the Burden of the fleſh, are truly admirable.—'In hoc tam procelloſo, & in omnes Tempeſtatos expoſito navigantibus mari, nullus portus, niſi mortis eſt. Nec itaque invideris Fratri tuo; quieſcit, Tandem liber, tandem tutus, tandem æternus eſt. Fruitur nunc aperto & libero Cœlo; ex humili & depreſſo, in eum emicuit locum, qui ſolutas vinculis animas beato recipit ſinu; & nunc omnia rerum natura bona cum ſumma voluptate percipit.' Sen. ad Polyb.

† Wiſd. v. 4, 5.

" die the death, of the righteous. Oh! let my " latter end, and future ſtate, be like theirs."

WHAT Figure is that, which ſtrikes my eye, from an eminent part of the Wall? It is not only placed in a more elevated Situation than the reſt, but carries a more ſplendid and ſumptuous air than ordinary. Swords and ſpears, murthering engines, and inſtruments of ſlaughter, adorn the ſtone with a formidable magnificence.——It proves to be the Monument of a noble Warrior.

Is ſuch reſpect, thought I, paid to the memory of this brave Soldier, for ſacrificing his life to the public Good?——Then, what honours, what immortal honours, are due to the great captain of our ſalvation? who, though Lord of the Angelic Legions; and ſupreme commander of all the heavenly Hoſts; willingly offered himſelf a bleeding propitiation for Sinners!

THE One died, being a Mortal; and only yielded up a life, that was long before forfeited to divine juſtice; which muſt ſoon have been ſurrendered as a Debt to Nature, if it had not fallen as a prey to War;—But CHRIST took fleſh, and gave up the ghoſt, though he was the great I AM; the fountain of exiſtence, who calls happineſs and immortality all his own. He, who thought it no robbery to be Equal with God; he, whoſe outgoings were from everlaſting; even he, was made in the Likeneſs of Man, and cut off out of the land of the living. Wonder, O heavens! Be aſtoniſhed, O earth! He died the death, of whom it is witneſſed, that he is " the true GOD, and eternal life *."

THE one expoſed himſelf to Peril, in the Service of his Sovereign, and his Country; which, though it was glorious to do, yet would have been ignominious, in ſuch circumſtances, to have declined.—But CHRIST

* 1 John v. 20.

CHRIST took the field, though he was the bleſſed and only Potentate, the KING of kings, and LORD of lords. Chriſt took the field, though he was ſure to drop in the engagement; and put on the harneſs, though he knew before hand, it muſt reek with his Blood. That prince of heaven reſigned his royal perſon, not barely to the Hazard, but to the inevitable Stroke; to death, certain in its approach, and armed with all its horrors.—And for whom? Not for thoſe who were in any degree deſerving; but for his own diſobedient creatures; for the pardon of condemned malefactors; for a band of rebels, a race of traitors, the moſt obnoxious and inexcuſable of all criminals; whom he might have left to periſh in their iniquities, without the leaſt impeachment of his Goodneſs; nay, to the advantageous Diſplay of his avenging Juſtice.

THE One, 'tis probable, died expeditiouſly; was ſoon wounded, and ſoon ſlain: A bullet, lodged in his heart, a ſword, ſheathed in his breaſt, or a battle-ax, cleaving the brain, might put a ſpeedy End to his miſery, diſpatch him "as in a moment:" —Whereas the divine redeemer expired in tedious and protracted torments. His pangs were as lingering as they were exquiſite. Even in the Prelude to his laſt ſufferings, what a load of ſorrows overwhelmed his ſacred humanity! till the intolerable preſſure wrung blood, inſtead of ſweat, from every pore; till the crimſon flood bathed his body, ſtained all his raiment, and tinged the very ſtones.——But, when the laſt Scene of the tragedy commenced; when the executioner's hammer had nailed him to the croſs; Oh! how many diſmal Hours, did that amiable and illuſtrious ſufferer hang, a ſpectacle of woe to GOD, to angels, and to men: His temples mangled with the thorny crown: his hands and feet cleft with the rugged irons; his fleſh covered with wounds, ſmarting and agonizing in every vein;

vein; and his ſoul, his very ſoul, pierced with pangs of unutterable diſtreſs! So long he hung, that nature, through all her dominions, was thrown into ſympathizing commotions. The earth could no longer ſuſtain ſuch barbarous indignities, without trembling; nor the ſun behold them, without horror. Nay, ſo long did he hang in this extremity of torture, that the alarm reached even the remote regions of the dead. —Never, O my ſoul, never forget the amazing truth: The lamb of GOD was worried, was ſlaughtered with the utmoſt inhumanity, and endured death, in all its bitterneſs, for thee. His murderers, ſtudiouſly cruel, ſo guided the fatal cup, that he taſted every drop of its gall before he drank it off to the very dregs.

ONCE again; The one died like a hero, and fell gallantly in the field of battle.——But died not CHRIST "as a fool dieth *?" Not on the bed of honour, with ſcars of glory on his breaſt; but, like ſome execrable miſcreant on a gibbet; with laſhes of the vile ſcourge on his back. Yes, the bleſſed JESUS bowed his expiring head on the accurſed tree, and poured out his ſoul betwixt two infamous felons; ſuſpended between heaven and earth, as an outcaſt from both, and unworthy of either.

OH; what ſuitable returns, of inflamed and adoring devotion, can we make to the holy one of GOD, thus dying, that we might live? Dying in ignominy and anguiſh, that we might live for ever in the heights of joy, and ſit for ever on thrones of glory.—Alas! it is not in us, impotent, inſenſible mortals, to be duly thankful. He only, who confers ſuch inconceivably rich favours, can enkindle a proper warmth of grateful affection. Then build thyſelf a monument, moſt gracious Immanuel, build thyſelf an everlaſting monument, of gratitude in our ſouls. Inſcribe

* 2 Sam. iii. 33.

Inſcribe the memory of thy matchleſs beneficence, not with ink and pen, but with that precious blood, which guſhed from thy ſtreaming veins. Engrave it, not with the hammer and chiſſel, but with the ſharpened ſpear, which pierced thy bleſſed ſide. Let it ſtand conſpicuous and indelible, not on outward tables of ſtone, but on the very inmoſt tables of our hearts.

One thing more let me obſerve, before I bid adieu to this entombed warrior, and his garniſhed ſepulchre. How mean are theſe oſtentatious methods of bribing the vote of fame, and purchaſing a little poſthumous renown! What a poor ſubſtitute for a ſet of memorable actions, is poliſhed alabaſter, or the mimickry of ſculptured marble! The real excellency of this * bleeding patriot is written on the minds of his countrymen: it would be remembered with applauſe, ſo long as the nation ſubſiſts, without this artificial expedient to perpetuate it —— And ſuch, ſuch is the monument I would wiſh for myſelf. Let me leave a memorial in the breaſts

* Sir Belvil Granville, ſlain in the civil wars, at an engagement with the rebels—It may poſſibly be ſome entertainment to the reader, to ſubjoin Sir Belvil's character, as it is drawn by that celebrated pen, which wrote the hiſtory of thoſe unfortunate times.—"That "which would have clouded any victory, ſays the no- "ble hiſtorian, and made the loſs of others leſs ſpoken "of, was the death of Sir Belvil Granville. He was in- "deed an excellent perſon, whoſe activity, intereſt, and "reputation, were the foundation of what had been "done in Cornwall: His temper and affections ſo pub- "lic, that no accident which happened could make "any impreſſion upon him: and his example kept o- "thers from taking any thing ill, or at leaſt ſeeming to "do ſo. In a word, a brighter courage, and a gentler "diſpoſition, were never married together, to make "the moſt chearful and innocent converſation."

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breasts of my fellow-creatures. Let surviving friends bear witness, that I have not lived to myself alone, nor been altogether unserviceable in my generation. O! let an uninterrupted series of beneficent offices be the inscription, and the best interests of my acquaintance the plate, that exhibits it.

Let the poor, as they pass by my grave, point at the little spot, and thankfully acknowledge "There lies the man, whose unwearied kindness "was the constant relief of my various distresses; "who tenderly visited my languishing bed, and "readily supplied my indigent circumstances.— "How often were his counsels a guide to my perplexed thoughts, and a cordial to my dejected "spirits! 'Tis owing to God's blessing on his seasonable charities, and prudent consolations, that "I now live, and live in comfort."——Let a person, once ignorant and ungodly, lift up his eyes to heaven, and say within himself, as he walks over my bones, "Here are the last remains of that "sincere friend, who watched for my soul. I can "never forget, with what a heedless gaiety I was "posting on in the paths of perdition; and I tremble "to think, into what irretrievable ruin I might "quickly have been plunged, had not his faithful "admonitions arrested me in the wild career. I "was unacquainted with the gospel of peace, and "unconcerned about its unsearchable treasures: "but now, enlightened by his instructive conversation, I see the all-sufficiency of my Saviour; "and, animated by his repeated exhortations, I "count all things but loss, that I may win "Christ. Methinks, his discourses, seasoned "with religion, and blessed by grace, still tingle "in my ears; are still warm on my heart; and, I "trust, will be more and more operative, till we

"meet

" meet each other in the houſe not made with " hands, eternal in the heavens."

BUT, the only infallible way of immortalizing our characters; a way equally open to the meaneſt and moſt exalted fortune, is " To make our cal- " ling and election ſure;" to gain ſome ſweet evidence, that our names are written in heaven. Then, however they may be diſregarded or forgotten, among men; they will not fail to be had in everlaſting remembrance, before the LORD.—This is, of all diſtinctions, far the nobleſt: This will iſſue in never-dying renown. Ambition, be this thy object, and every page of ſcripture will ſanctify thy paſſion; even grace itſelf will fan thy flame.—Every earthly memorial will ſhortly be obliterated. The tongue of thoſe, whoſe happineſs we have zealouſly promoted, muſt ſoon be ſilent in the coffin. Characters cut with a pen of iron, and committed to the ſolid rock, will ere long ceaſe to be legible †. But as many as are inrolled " in the Lamb's book of life," he himſelf declares, ſhall never be blotted out of thoſe annals of Eternity ‡. When a flight of years has mouldered the triumphant column into duſt: when the brazen ſtatue periſhes, under the corroding hand of time: thoſe honours ſtill continue; ſtill are blooming and incorruptible, in the world of glory.

Make the extended ſkies your tomb;
  Let ſtars record your worth:
Yet know, vain mortals, all muſt die,
  As nature's ſicklieſt birth.

Would bounteous heav'n indulge my pray'r,
  I frame a nobler choice;
Nor living wiſh the pompous pile;
  Nor, dead, regret the loſs.

IN

† —'Data ſunt ipſis quoque fata ſepulchris.' Juv.
‡ Rev. iii. 5.

In thy fair book of life divine,
My GOD, inſcribe my name;
There let it fill ſome humble place,
Beneath the ſlaughter'd Lamb.

Thy ſaints, while ages roll away,
In endleſs fame ſurvive;
Their glories, o'er the wrongs of time,
Greatly triumphant, live.

YONDER entrance leads, I ſuppoſe, to the vault. Let me turn aſide, and take one view of the habitation, and its tenants.——The ſullen door grates upon its hinges: not uſed to receive many viſitants, it admits me with reluctance and murmurs.—What meaneth this ſudden trepidation: while I deſcend the ſteps, and am viſiting the pale nations of the dead?—Be compoſed, my ſpirits; there is nothing to fear in theſe quiet chambers: "Here, even the wicked ceaſe from troubling."

GOOD Heavens! what a ſolemn ſcene! How diſmal the gloom! Here is perpetual darkneſs, and night even at noon-day——How doleful the ſolitude! Not one trace of chearful ſociety, but ſorrow and terror ſeem to have made this their dreaded abode.——Hark! how the hollow dome reſounds at every tread. The echoes, that long have ſlept, are awakened, and whiſper along the walls.

A BEAM or two finds its way through the grates, and reflects a feeble glimmer from the nails of the coffins. So many of thoſe ſad ſpectacles, half concealed in ſhades, half ſeen dimly by the baleful twilight, add a deeper horror to theſe gloomy manſions.—I pore upon the inſcriptions, and am juſt able to pick out, That theſe are the remains of the rich and renowned. No vulgar dead are depoſited here. The moſt illuſtrious, and right honourable, have claimed this for their laſt retreat. And, indeed, they

retain ſomewhat of a ſhadowy Pre-eminence. They lie, ranged in mournful order, and in a ſort of ſilent pomp, under the arches of an ample ſepulchre: while meaner corpſes, without much ceremony, "go down to the ſtones of the pit."

My apprehenſions recover from their ſurprize: I find, here are no phantoms, but ſuch as fear raiſes. ——However it ſtill amazes me, to obſerve the wonders of this nether world. Thoſe who received vaſt revenues, and called whole lordſhips their own, are here reduced to a few ſheets of lead. Rooms of ſtate and ſumptuous furniture are reſigned, for no other ornament than the ſhroud, for no other apartment than the darkſome niche. No ſplendid retinue attends this ſolitary dwelling; the lordly equipage hovers no longer about the lifeleſs maſter; nothing but the ſable banners, which ſeem to be diſplayed in triumph over a proſtrate captive; or a duſty ſtatue, which, while the regardleſs world is as gay as ever, the ſculptor's hand has taught to weep. Inſtead of the ſtar that blazed upon the breaſt, or coronet that glittered round the temples; the only remains of departed dignity are, the weather-beaten atchievement, and tattered eſcutcheon.—— Thoſe who glori-ed in high-born anceſtors,‡ and noble pedigree, here drop their lofty pretenſions. They acknowledge kindred with creeping things, and quarter arms with the meaneſt reptiles. "They ſay to corrup-"tion, thou art my father; and to the worm, thou "art my mother and my ſiſter."—— O mortifying truth! Sufficient, one would think, to wean the moſt ſanguine appetite from this tranſitory ſtate of things; from its fickly ſatisfactions, its fading glories, its vaniſhing treaſures.

For

‡ HERE LIES THE GREAT.——Falſe marble! where?
Nothing but poor and ſordid duſt lies here.
Cowley.

For now, ye lying vanities of life!
Ye ever-tempting, ever-cheating train!
Where are ye now? And what is your amount? §

WHAT is all the world to theſe poor breathleſs beings? — What are their pleaſures? A bubble broke.—What their honours? A dream that is forgotten.—What the ſum-total of their enjoyments below? Once, perhaps, it appeared to inexperienced and fond deſire, ſomething conſiderable: but, now death has meaſured it with his line, and weighed it in his ſcale, what is the upſhot? Alas! it is ſhorter than a ſpan, lighter than the dancing ſpark, and driven away like the diſſolving ſmoke.

INDULGE, my ſoul, a ſerious pauſe. Recollect all the gay things that were wont to dazzle thy eyes, and inveigle thy affections. Here examine thoſe baits of ſenſe: here form an eſtimate of their real value. Suppoſe thyſelf firſt, among the favourites of fortune, who revel in the lap of pleaſure, who ſhine in the robes of honour, and ſwim in tides of inexhauſted riches: yet how ſoon would the paſſing-bell proclaim thy exit! And when once that iron call has ſummoned thee to thy future reckoning, where would all theſe gratifications be? At that period, how will all the pageantry of the moſt affluent, conſpicuous, or luxurious circumſtances, vaniſh into empty air! And is this a happineſs ſo paſſionately to be coveted?

I THANK you, ye relicts of ſounding titles and magnificent names; ye have taught me more of the littleneſs of the world, than all the volumes of my library. Your nobility arrayed in a winding-ſheet, your grandeur mouldering in an urn, are the moſt invincible proofs of the nothingneſs of created things. Never, ſurely, did Providence write this important

§ Thomſ. Winter, lin. 210.

point in ſuch legible characters, as in the aſhes of my lord, or on the corpſe of his grace. * Let others, if they pleaſe, pay their obſequious court to your wealthy ſons, and ignobly fawn, or anxiouſly ſue, for preferments: my thoughts ſhall often reſort, in penſive contemplation, to the ſepulchres of their ſires; and learn from their ſleeping duſt, to moderate my expectations from mortals; to ſtand diſengaged from every undue attachment to the little intereſts of time: —— to get above the deluſive amuſements of honour, the gaudy tinſels of wealth, and all the empty ſhadows of a periſhing world.

HARK! what ſound is that? — In ſuch a ſituation, every noiſe alarms.—Solemn and ſlow it breaks again upon the ſilent air.—'Tis the ſtriking of the clock; deſigned, one would imagine, to ratify all my ſerious meditations. Methinks, it ſays Amen, and ſets a ſeal, to every improving hint. It tells me; that another portion of my appointed time is elapſed. One calls it, "The knell of my departed hours." 'Tis the watch-word to vigilance, and activity. It cries, in the ear of reaſon, "redeem the time. Catch the "favourable gales of opportunity: O! catch them "while they breathe; before they are irrecoverably "loſt. The ſpan of life ſhortens continually. Thy "minutes are all upon the wing, and haſtening to "be gone. Thou art a borderer upon eternity; "and making inceſſant advances to the ſtate, thou "art contemplating."—O! may the admonition ſink deep, into an attentive and obedient mind! May it teach me that heavenly arithmetic, of "number-"ing my days, and applying my heart unto wiſdom!"

I HAVE often walked, beneath the impending promontory's craggy cliff; I have often trod the vaſt ſpaces, of the lonely deſart; and penetrated the inmoſt

* ——Mors ſola fatetur
Quantula ſint hominum corpuſcula. Juv.

inmoſt receſſes, of the dreary cavern: but never, never beheld nature lowering, with ſo tremendous a form; never felt ſuch impreſſions of awe, ſtriking cold on my heart; as under theſe black-brow'd arches, amidſt theſe mouldy walls, and ſurrounded by ſuch rueful objects; where melancholy, deepeſt melancholy, for ever ſpreads her raven wings.—Let me now emerge from the damp and dreadful obſcurity. Farewel, ye ſeats of deſolation, and ſhades of death! —Gladly I reviſit the realms of day.

HAVING caſt a ſuperficial view, upon theſe receptacles of the dead; curioſity prompts my inquiry, to a more intimate ſurvey. And could we draw back the covering of the tomb; could we ſee, what thoſe are now, who once were mortals—Oh! how would it ſurpriſe, and grieve us! ſurpriſe us, to behold the prodigious transformation, that has taken place on every individual; grieve us, to obſerve the diſhonour done to our nature in general, within theſe ſubterraneous lodgments!

HERE, the ſweet and winning aſpect, that wore perpetually an attractive ſmile; grins horribly a naked, ghaſtly ſkull.—The eye, that outſhone the diamond's luſtre; and glanced her lovely lightning, into the moſt guarded heart: Alas! Where is it? Where ſhall we find the rolling ſparkler? How are all thoſe radiant glories totally, totally eclipſed!——The tongue, that once commanded all the charms of harmony, and all the powers of eloquence, in this ſtrange land has "forgot its "cunning." Where are now thoſe ſtrains of melody, which raviſhed our ears? Where is that flow of perſuaſion, which carried captive our judgments? The great maſter of language, and of ſong, is become ſilent as the night that ſurrounds him.—— The pampered fleſh, ſo lately cloathed in purple, and fine linen, how is it covered rudely with clods of clay! There was a time, when the timorouſly

nice creature, would ſcarce "* adventure to ſet a "foot upon the ground, for delicateneſs and ten- "derneſs;" but is now wrapped in clammy earth, and ſleeps on no ſofter a pillow than the ragged gra- vel-ſtones.—Here, "the ſtrong men bow them- "ſelves:" The nervous arm is unſtrung; the brawny ſinews are relaxed; the limbs not long ago the Seats of vigour and activity, lie down motionleſs; and the bones, which were as bars of iron, are crumbled into duſt.

HERE, the man of buſineſs forgets all his favourite ſchemes, and diſcontinues the purſuit of gain. Here, is a total ſtand to the circulation of merchandize, and the hurry of trade. In theſe ſolitary receſſes; as in the building of Solomon's temple; is heard no ſound of the hammer and ax. The winding-ſheet, and the coffin, are the utmoſt bound of all earthly devices; "hitherto may they "go, but no farther."——Here, the ſons of pleaſure take a final farewel, of their dear delights. No more is the ſenſualiſt anointed with oil, or crowned with roſe-buds: he chants no more to the melody of the viol; nor revels any longer, at the banquet of wine. Inſtead of ſumptuous tables, and delicious treats, the poor voluptuary is himſelf a feaſt for fattened inſects; "the reptile riots in his Fleſh; "the worm feeds ſweetly on him.†"—— Here alſo, beauty fails; bright beauty drops her luſtre here. Oh! how her roſes fade, and her lilies languiſh, in this bleak ſoil! how does the grand leveller pour contempt, upon the charmer of our Hearts! How turn to deformity, what captivated the world before!

COULD the lover have a ſight of his once inchanting fair-one; what a ſtartling aſtoniſhment would

* Deut. xxviii. 56. † Job xxiv. 20.

would ſeize him!—"Is this the object, I not long "ago ſo paſſionately admired! I ſaid, ſhe was di- "vinely fair; and thought her more than mortal. "Her form was ſymmetry itſelf; every elegance "breathed in her air; and all the graces waited on "her motions.——'Twas muſic, when ſhe ſpoke: "but when ſhe ſpoke encouragement, 'twas little "leſs than rapture. How my heart danced, to "thoſe charming accents!—And can that, which, "ſome weeks ago, was to admiration lovely, be "now ſo inſufferably loathſome?—Where are thoſe "bluſhing cheeks; where the coral lips; where "that ivory neck, on which the curling jet, in "ſuch gloſſy ringlets, flowed; with a thouſand "other beauties of perſon, and ten thouſand deli- "cacies of action* ——— Amazing, diſtracting "alteration!—Fondly I gazed upon the glittering "meteor: it ſhone brightly; and I miſtook it for "a ſtar; for a permanent and ſubſtantial good. "But how is it fallen! fallen from an orb, not its "own! And all that I can trace on earth, is but a "putrid maſs."

Lie, poor Florella! lie deep, as thou doſt, in obſcure darkneſs. Let night, with her impene- trable ſhades, always conceal thee. Thy dwel- ling agrees with thy condition. Let no prying eye, be witneſs to thy diſgrace; but let thy ſurviving ſiſters, think upon thy ſtate; when they contem- plate, the idol in the glaſs. When the pleaſing image riſes gracefully to view, ſurrounded with a world of charms; and fluſhed with joy, at the conſciouſ- neſs of them all:—Then, in thoſe minutes of temp-

* 'Quo fugit Venus? Heu! Quove color? dicens
Quo motus? Quid habes, illius, illius,
Quæ ſpirabat Amores,
Quæ me ſurpuerat mihi? Hor.

tation and danger, when vanity uſes to ſteal into the thoughts:—Then, let them remember, what a veil of horror is drawn over a face; that was once beautiful and brilliant, as theirs. Such a ſeaſonable reflection, might regulate the labours of the toilet, and create a more earneſt ſolicitude, to poliſh the jewel, than to varniſh the caſket. It might then become their higheſt ambition, to have the mind decked with divine virtues; and dreſſed after the amiable pattern of their Redeemer's holineſs.

And would this prejudice their perſons, or depreciate their charms?——Quite the reverſe: It would ſpread a ſort of heavenly glory, over the fineſt ſet of features; and heighten the lovelineſs, of every other engaging accompliſhment.—And what is yet a more inviting conſideration; theſe flowers would not wither with nature, nor be tarniſhed by time; but open continually into richer beauties, and flouriſh even in the winter of age.——But, the moſt incomparable recommendation of theſe noble qualities, is; that from their hallowed relics, as from the fragrant aſhes of the Phœnix, will ere long ariſe an illuſtrious form; bright as the wings of angels; laſting, as the light of the new Jeruſalem.

For my part; the remembrance of this ſad revolution, ſhall make me aſhamed to pay my devotion to a ſhrine of periſhing fleſh; and afraid to expect all my happineſs, from ſo brittle a joy. It ſhall teach me, not to think too highly of well-proportioned clay; though formed in the moſt elegant mould, and animated with the ſweeteſt ſoul. 'Tis heaven's laſt, beſt, and crowning gift; to be received with gratitude, and cheriſhed with love, as a moſt valuable bleſſing; not worſhipped with the incenſe of Flattery, and ſtrains of fulſome adoration, as a goddeſs——It will cure, I truſt, the dotage of my eyes: and incline me always to prefer the ſubſtantial

tial "Ornaments of a meek and virtuous ſpirit;" before the tranſient decorations, of white and red on the ſkin.

HERE, I called in my roving meditations, from their long excurſion on this tender ſubject. Fancy liſtened awhile, to the ſoliloquy of a lover; but now judgment reſumes the reins, and guides my thoughts to more near and ſelf-intereſting inquiries.——However, upon a review of the whole ſcene: crowded with ſpectacles of mortality, and trophies of death: I could not forbear ſmiting my breaſt, and fetching a ſigh, and lamenting over the nobleſt of all viſible beings, lying in ruins under the feet of "the pale horſe, and his rider *." I could not forbear that pathetic exclamation, "O! "thou † Adam, what haſt thou done!" What deſolation, has thy diſobedience wrought in the earth!—O! the ruinous, the tranſcendent malignity of ſin! ſin, has demoliſhed ſo many ſtately ſtructures of fleſh: ſin, has made ſuch havock, among the moſt excellent ranks of GOD's lower creation: and ſin (that deadly bane of our nature) would have plunged our better part, into the execrable horrors of the nethermoſt hell; had not our merciful mediator interpoſed, and given himſelf for our ranſom.——Therefore, what grateful acknowledgments, does the whole world of penitent ſinners owe; what ardent returns of love, will a whole heaven of glorified believers pay; to ſuch a friend, benefactor, and deliverer!

MUSING upon theſe melancholy objects, a faithful remembrancer ſuggeſts from within——"Muſt "this ſad change, ſucceed in me alſo? Am I to draw "my laſt gaſp; to become a breathleſs corpſe;

* Rev. vi. 8. † 2 Eſdr. vii. 48.

" and be, what I deplore? ‡ Is there a time ap-
" proaching, when this body ſhall be carried out
" upon the bier, and conſigned to its clay-cold bed?
" while ſome kind acquaintance, perhaps, may
" let fall one parting tear; and cry, Alas! my bro-
" ther!"——Nothing is more certain. A decree, much ſurer than the law of the Medes and Perſians, has irrevocably determined the doom.

SHOULD one of theſe ghaſtly figures burſt from his confinement; and ſtart up, in frightful deformity before me: ſhould the haggard ſkeleton lift a clattering hand; and point it full in my view: ſhould it open the ſtiffened Jaws; and, with a hoarſe tremendous murmur, break this profound ſilence: ſhould it accoſt me, as Samuel's apparition addreſſed the trembling King——" The Lord ſhall deli-
" ver thee alſo into the hands of death; yet a little
" while and thou ſhalt be with me.*"———The ſolemn warning, delivered in ſo ſtriking a manner, muſt ſtrongly impreſs my imagination: a meſſage in thunder, would ſcarce ſink deeper—Yet, there is abundantly greater reaſon to be alarmed, by that expreſs declaration of the LORD GOD Almighty, " Thou ſhalt ſurely die."—Well then, ſince ſentence is paſſed; ſince I am a condemned man; and know not when the dead warrant may arrive; let me die to ſin, and die to the world; before I die beneath the ſtroke, of a righteous GOD. Let me employ the little uncertain interval, of reſpite from execution; in preparing for a happier ſtate, and a better

‡ I paſs, with melancholy ſtate,
By all theſe ſolemn heaps of fate;
And think, as ſoft and ſad I tread,
Above the venerable dead,
" Time was, like me, they life poſſeſs'd;
" And time ſhall be, when I ſhall reſt." Parnel.

* 1 Sam. xxviii. 19.

better life; that, when the fatal moment comes, and I am commanded to ſhut my eyes, upon all things here below; I may open them again, to ſee my Saviour in the manſions above.

SINCE this body, which is ſo fearfully and wonderfully made, muſt fall to pieces in the grave; ſince I muſt ſoon reſign all my bodily powers to darkneſs, inactivity, and corruption; Oh! let it be my conſtant care to uſe them well, while I poſſeſs them!—Let my hands be ſtretched forth to relieve the needy: and always be "more ready to give, than to receive."———Let my knees bend in deepeſt humiliations before the throne of grace; while my eyes are caſt down to the earth, in penitential confuſion; or devoutly looking up to heaven, for pardoning mercy!——In every friendly interview, let the "law of kindneſs dwell on my lips;" or rather, if the ſeriouſneſs of my acquaintance permits, let the goſpel of peace flow from my tongue. Oh! that I might be enabled, in every public concourſe, to lift up my voice like a trumpet; and pour abroad a more joyful ſound, than its moſt melodious accents, in proclaiming the glad tidings of free ſalvation!—Be ſhut, my ears, reſolutely ſhut, againſt the malevolent whiſpers of ſlander, and the contagious breath of filthy talking: but be ſwift to hear, the inſtructions of wiſdom; be all attention, when your Redeemer ſpeaks; imbibe the precious truths; and convey them carefully to the heart.—Carry me, my feet, to the temple of the LORD; to the beds of the ſick; and houſes of the poor.——May all my members, devoted intirely to my divine maſter, be the willing inſtruments of promoting his glory!

THEN, ye embalmers, you may ſpare your pains: theſe works of faith, and labours of love; theſe, ſhall be my ſpices and perfumes. Enwrapped in theſe, I would lay me gently down, and ſleep ſweetly in the

the bleſſed JESUS; hoping that God will "give commandment concerning my bones," and one day fetch them up from the duſt, as ſilver from the furnace, purified, "I ſay not, ſeven times, but ſeventy "times ſeven."

HERE, my contemplation took wing; and, in an inſtant, alighted in the garden, adjoining to Mount Calvary. Having viewed the abode of my deceaſed fellow-creatures; methought, I longed to ſee the place, where our LORD lay.——And, Oh! what a marvellous ſpectacle was once exhibited, in this memorable ſepulchre! he ‖, "who cloathes "himſelf with light, as with a garment; and "walks upon the wings of the wind *;" was pleaſed to wear the habiliments of mortality, and dwelt among the proſtrate dead.——Who can repeat the wondrous truth, too often? Who can dwell upon the tranſporting theme, too long? He, who

‖ Darkneſs his curtain, and his bed the duſt.
Tho' ſun and ſtars are duſt beneath his throne.
Night Thoughts.

* The ſacred ſcriptures, ſpeaking of the Supreme Being, ſay—He walketh upon the waves of the ſea; to denote his uncontroulable power, Job. ix. 8.—He walketh in the circuit of Heaven; to expreſs the immenſity of his preſence, Job xxii. 14.——He walketh upon the wings of the wind; to ſignify the amazing ſwiftneſs of his operations, Pſal. civ. 3.—In which laſt phraſe, there is, I think, an elegance and emphaſis, not taken notice of by our commentators, and yet unequalled in any writer.—Not, he flieth; he runneth; but, he walketh: and that, on the very wings of the wind: on the moſt impetuous of elements, rouſed into its utmoſt rage, and ſweeping along with inconceivable rapidity. A tumult in nature, not to be deſcribed, is the compoſed and ſedate work of the DEITY. A ſpeed, not to be meaſured, is (with reverence I uſe the expreſſion, and to comport with our low methods of conception) the ſolemn and majeſtic foot pace of JEHOVAH,—how flat

who ſits enthroned in glory, and diffuſes bliſs among all the heavenly hoſts; was once a pale and bloody corpſe, and preſſed this little ſpot.

O DEATH! how great was thy triumph in that hour! Never did thy gloomy realms contain ſuch a priſoner before.—Priſoner, did I ſay? No; he was more than conqueror. He aroſe, far more mightily than Samſon, from a tranſient ſlumber: broke down the gates, and demoliſhed the ſtrong-holds, of thoſe dark dominions.——And this, O mortals, this is your only conſolation and ſecurity. JESUS has trod the dreadful path, and ſmoothed it for your paſſage.—JESUS, ſleeping in the chambers of the tomb, has brightened this diſmal manſion; and left an inviting odour, in thoſe beds of duſt. The dying JESUS (never let the comfortable truth depart from your minds! The dying JESUS) is your ſure protection, your unqueſtionable paſſport, through the territories of the grave. Believe in him; and they ſhall prove a "highway to Sion;" ſhall tranſmit you ſafe, to Paradiſe. Believe in him; and ye ſhall be no loſers, but unſpeakable gainers, by your diſſolution. For, hear what the oracle of heaven ſays, upon this important point: Whoſo believeth in me, ſhall never die*.—What ſublime, and emphatical language, is this! Thus much, at leaſt, it muſt import:—— "The nature of that laſt change, ſhall be ſurpri- "ſingly altered, for the better. It ſhall no longer "be inflicted, as a puniſhment; but rather vouch- "ſafed, as a bleſſing: to ſuch perſons, it ſhall "come

flat are the following lines, even in the great maſter of Lyric ſong,

Ocyor cervis, & agente nimbos
Ocyor Euro,

when compared with this inimitable ſtroke of divine poetry!—He walketh upon the wings of the wind.

* John xi. 26.

" come attended, with ſuch a train of benefits; as " will render it a kind of happy impropriety, to call " it dying. Dying! no; 'tis then they truly begin " to live. Their exit, is the end of their frailty, and " their entrance upon perfection: their laſt groan, " is the prelude to life and immortality."

O YE timorous ſouls, that are terrified at the paſſing-bell; that turn pale, at the ſight of an opened grave; and can ſcarce behold a coffin, or a ſkull, without a ſhuddering horror: Ye that are in bondage to the griſly tyrant, and tremble at the ſhakeing of his iron rod; cry mightily, to the father of your ſpirits, for faith in his dear ſon. Faith, will free you from your ſlavery*. Faith, will embolden you to tread on (this fierceſt of) ſerpents †. Old Simon,

* Death's terror is the mountain Faith removes:
'Tis faith diſarms deſtruction——
Believe, and look with triumph on the tomb.

Theſe, and ſome other quotations, I am proud to borrow from the Night Thoughts; eſpecially from Night the fourth: in which, energy of language, ſublimity of ſentiment, and the moſt exquiſite beauties of poetry, are the leaſt perfections to be admired: almoſt every line glows with devotion; riſes into the moſt exalted apprehenſions of the adorable Redeemer; and is animated with the moſt lively faith, in his all-ſufficient mediation. The author of this excellent performance has the peculiar felicity, of ennobling all the ſtrength of ſtyle, and every delicacy of imagination, with the grand and momentous truths of Chriſtianity. Theſe thoughts give the higheſt entertainment to the fancy; and impart the nobleſt improvement to the mind: they not only refine our taſte, but prepare us for death, and ripen us for glory. I never take up this admirable piece; but am ready to cry out—Tecum vivere amem, tecum obeam libens; i. e. " Inſpire me with " ſuch a ſpirit, and life ſhall be delightful, nor death " itſelf unwelcome."

† Luke x. 19.

mon, claſping the child JESUS in the arms of his fleſh, and the glorious mediator in the arms of his faith, departs with tranquillity and peace. That bitter perſecutor Saul having won CHRIST; being found in CHRIST; longs to be diſmiſſed from cumbrous clay, and kindles into rapture at the proſpect of diſſolution*. Methinks, I ſee another of IMMANUEL's followers, truſting in his Saviour, leaning on his beloved; go down to the ſilent ſhades, with compoſure and alacrity†. In this powerful name, an innumerable company of ſinful creatures have ſet up their banners; and "overcome, through the blood of the "Lamb." Authorized by the captain of thy ſalvation, thou alſo mayſt ſet thy feet upon the neck of this king of terrors. Furniſhed with this antidote thou alſo mayſt play round the hole of the aſp, and put thy undaunted hand on this cockatrice den. Thou mayſt‡ feel the viper faſtening to thy mortal part, and fear no evil: thou ſhalt one day ſhake it off by a joyful reſurrection, and ſuffer no harm.

RESURRECTION! that chearing word eaſes my mind of an anxious thought, and ſolves a moſt momentous queſtion. I was going to aſk, "wherefore do all theſe corpſes lie here, in this "abject condition? Is this their final ſtate? Has "death conquered? And will the tyrant hold "captivity captive? How long wilt thou forget "them, O LORD? For ever?"——No, ſaith the voice from heaven, the word of divine revelation: The righteous are all "priſoners of hope§." There is an hour (an awful ſecret that, and known only to all-foreſeeing wiſdom), an appointed hour there is, when an act of grace will paſs the great ſeal above, and give them an univerſal diſcharge; a general delivery from the abodes of corruption.

* Phil. i. 23. 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. † 2 Pet. i. 14.
‡ Acts xxviii. 3, 5. § Zech. ix. 12.

corruption. Then, ſhall the LORD JESUS deſcend from heaven, with the ſhout of the archangel, and the trump of GOD. Deſtruction itſelf ſhall hear the call, and the obedient grave give up her dead. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, they ſhake off the ſleep of ten thouſand years; and ſpring forth, like the bounding roe, to "meet their "LORD in the air."

AND, Oh! with what cordial congratulations; what tranſporting endearments; do the ſoul and body, thoſe affectionate companions, reunite! But, with how much greater demonſtrations of kindneſs, are they both received, by their compaſſionate Redeemer! The antient of days, who comes in the clouds of heaven, is their friend; their father; their bridegroom. They have nothing to fear, from all the pomp of his appearance. Thoſe tremendous Solemnities, which ſpread deſolation and aſtoniſhment thro' the univerſe; ſerve only to inflame their love, and heighten their hopes. The judge, the awful judge, amidſt all his magnificence and ſplendor, vouchſafes to confeſs their names; vouchſafes to commemorate their fidelity, before all the inhabitants of the ſkies, and the whole aſſembled world.

HARK! the thunders are huſhed: the lightnings ceaſe their rage: the angelic armies, ſtand in ſilent ſuſpenſe: the whole race of Adam, is wrapt in pleaſing, or anxious expectation.——And now, that adorable Being, whoſe favour is better than life; whoſe acceptance, is a crown of glory; lifts up the light of his countenance, upon the righteous. He ſpeaks; and what raviſhing words, proceed from his gracious lips! What ecſtacies of delight, they enkindle in the breaſts of the faithful!—"I accept you, O my people! Ye are they, "that believed in my name. Ye are they, that "renounced yourſelves, and are complete in me. I

"ſee

"ſee no ſpot or blemiſh in you; for ye are waſhed in "my blood, and cloathed in my righteouſneſs. Re-"newed by my ſpirit, ye have glorified me on earth, "and have been faithful unto death. Come, then, ye "ſervants of holineſs, enter into the joy of your "LORD. Come, ye children of light; ye bleſſed of "my father; receive the kingdom, that ſhall never "be removed; wear the crown, which fadeth not "away; and enjoy pleaſures for evermore!"

THEN, it will be one of the ſmalleſt privileges of the righteous, that they ſhall languiſh no more; that ſickneſs will never again ſhew her pale countenance, in their dwellings*. Death itſelf will be "ſwallowed up in victory." That fatal javelin; which has drank the blood of monarchs, and finds its way to the hearts of all the ſons of Adam; ſhall be utterly broken. That enormous ſcythe; which has ſtruck empires from their root, and ſwept ages and generations into oblivion; ſhall lie by in perpetual uſeleſſneſs. Sin, alſo, which filled thy quiver, thou inſatiate archer!—Sin, which ſtrung thy arm with ſuch reſtleſs vigour—which pointed all thy ſhafts with inevitable deſtruction—Sin, will then be done away. Whatever is frail, or depraved, will be thrown off with our grave-cloaths. All to come, is perfect excellency, and conſummate happineſs; the term of whoſe continuance is eternity.

O ETERNITY! eternity! how are our boldeſt, our ſtrongeſt thoughts, loſt and overwhelmed in thee! Who can ſet land-marks, to limit thy dimenſions;

* Iſaiah, ſpeaking of the new Jeruſalem, mentions this, as one of its immunities. "The inhabitants thereof ſhall no more ſay, I am ſick." And another clauſe in its royal charter runs thus, "God ſhall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there ſhall be no more death, neither ſorrow nor crying; neither ſhall there be any more pain." Iſai. xxxiii. 94. Rev. xxi. 4.

dimenſions; or find plumbets, to fathom thy depths? Arithmeticians have figures, to compute all the progreſſions of time: Aſtronomers have inſtruments, to calculate the diſtances of the planets: but what numbers can ſtate, what lines can gage, the lengths and breadths of eternity? "It is higher than heaven; "what canſt thou do; deeper than hell; what "canſt thou know? The meaſure thereof, is longer "than the earth, broader than the ſea*."

MYSTERIOUS, mighty exiſtence! a ſum, not to be leſſened by the largeſt deductions: an extent, not to be contracted by all poſſible diminutions. None can truly ſay, after the moſt prodigious waſte of ages, "That ſo much of eternity is gone." For, when millions of centuries are elapſed, it is but juſt commencing; and, when millions more have run their ample round, it will be no nearer ending. Yea, when ages, numerous as the bloom of ſpring; increaſed by the herbage of ſummer; both augmented by the leaves of autumn; and all multiplied by the drops of rain, which drown the winter——————when theſe, and ten thouſand times ten thouſand more——————more than can be repreſented by any ſimilitude, or imagined by any conception, are all revolved; eternity, vaſt, boundleſs, amazing eternity, will only be beginning, or rather (if I may be allowed the expreſſion) only—beginning to begin.

WHAT a pleaſing, yet awful thought is this! Full of delight, and full of dread. O! may it alarm our fears; quicken our hopes; and animate all our endeavours! ſince we are ſoon to launch into this endleſs and inconceivable ſtate; let us give all diligence, to ſecure our entrance into bliſs. Now, let us give all diligence; becauſe there is no alteration,

* Job xi. 8, 9.

alteration, in the ſcenes of futurity. The wheel never turns: all is ſtedfaſt and immoveable, beyond the grave. Whether we are then ſeated on the throne, or ſtretched on the rack; a ſeal will be ſet to our condition, by the hand of everlaſting mercy, or inflexible juſtice.—The ſaints, always rejoice amidſt the ſmiles of heaven; their harps are perpetually tuned; their triumphs admit of no interruption—the ruin alſo of the wicked is irremediable. The fatal ſentence, once paſſed, is never to be repealed. No hope of exchanging their doleful habitations. But all things bear the ſame diſmal aſpect, for ever and ever.

THE wicked*——my mind recoils, at the apprehenſion of their miſery. It has ſtudiouſly waved the fearful ſubject; and ſeems unwilling to purſue it, even now.——But 'tis better to reflect upon it, for a few minutes, than to endure it, to eternal ages. Perhaps, the conſideration of their aggravated miſery, may be profitably terrible: may teach me more highly to prize the Saviour, who "deli-"vers from going down into the bottomleſs pit:" may drive me, like the avenger's ſword, to this only city of refuge, for obnoxious ſinners.

THE wicked ſeem to lie here, like malefactors, in a deep and ſtrong dungeon; reſerved againſt the day of trial.——"Their departure was without "peace." Clouds of horror, ſat lowering upon their cloſing eye-lids; moſt ſadly foreboding, the "Blackneſs of darkneſs for ever." When the laſt ſickneſs ſeized their frame, and the inevitable change advanced: when they ſaw the fatal arrow, fitting to the ſtrings; ſaw the deadly archer, aiming at their life; and felt the envenomed ſhaft, faſtened in their vitals—Good GOD! what fearfulneſs came upon them! what horrible dread overwhelmed

*—Animus meminiſſe horret, luctuque refugit.
Virg.

whelmed them! how did they ſtand ſhuddering, upon the tremendous precipice; exceſſively afraid to die, yet utterly unable to live!—O! what pale reviews, what ſtartling proſpects; conſpire to augment their ſorrows!—They look backward; and, behold! a moſt melancholy ſcene! ſins unrepented of; mercy ſlighted; and the day of grace ending.—They look forward, and nothing preſents itſelf, but the righteous judge; the dreadful tribunal; and a moſt ſolemn reckoning.—They roll around their affrighted eyes, on attending friends; and, if accomplices in debauchery, it ſharpens their anguiſh, to conſider this further aggravation of their guilt, that they have not ſinned alone, but drawn others into the ſnare. If religious acquaintance; it ſtrikes a freſh gaſh into their hearts, to think of never ſeeing them any more, but only at an unapproachable diſtance, ſeparated by the unpaſſable gulph.

AT laſt, perhaps, they begin to pray; finding no other poſſible way of relief, they are conſtrained to apply unto the Almighty: with trembling lips, and a faltering tongue, they cry unto that Sovereign Being, "who kills and makes alive."—But why, O! why have they deferred their addreſſes to heaven ſo long? why have they deſpiſed all his counſels; and ſtood incorrigible, under his inceſſant reproofs? How often, have they been forewarned of theſe terrors and moſt importunately intreated, to turn to the LORD!——I wiſh, they may find favour at this laſt hour: and, by a miracle of grace, be ſnatched from the very brink, the breaking brink of damnation. But alas! who can tell, whether affronted majeſty, will lend an ear to their complaint? He may, for aught any mortal knows, "laugh at their calamity, and mock when "their fear cometh."

THUS they lie groaning out the poor remains

of life; their limbs bathed in ſweat; their heart ſtruggling with convulſive throws; pains inſupportable throbbing thro' every pulſe; and innumerable darts of agony transfixing their conſcience.

In that dread moment, how the frantic ſoul
Raves round the walls of her clay tenement;
Runs to each avenue; and ſhrieks for help;
But ſhrieks in vain! How wiſhfully ſhe looks
On all ſhe's leaving, now no longer her's!
A little longer, yet a little longer,
O! might ſhe ſtay, to waſh away her crimes,
And fit her for her paſſage! Mournful ſight!
Her very eyes weep blood; and ev'ry groan
She heaves, is big with horror: but the foe,
Like a ſtaunch murderer, ſteady to his purpoſe,
Purſues her cloſe thro' ev'ry lane of life,
Nor miſſes once the track; but preſſes on;
Till, forced at laſt to the tremendous verge,
At once ſhe ſinks——

The GRAVE.

IF this be the end of the ungodly, "my ſoul, "come not thou into their ſecret! unto their aſſem-"bly, mine honour, be not thou united!"—Oh! how awfully accompliſhed is that prediction of inſpired wiſdom! "Sin, though ſeemingly ſweet in "the commiſſion; in the iſſue biteth like a ſerpent, "and ſtingeth like an adder."

HAPPY diſſolution! were this the period of their woes. But alas! all theſe tribulations, are only "the beginning of ſorrows;" one ſmall drop of that "cup of trembling," which is mingled for their future portion.——No ſooner has the laſt pang diſlodged the reluctant ſoul; but they are hurried into the preſence of an injured angry GOD, not under the conducting care of beneficent angels, but expoſed to the inſults of accurſed ſpirits; who lately tempted them, now upbraid them, and will

for

for ever torment them.——Who can conceive their confuſion and diſtreſs; when they ſtand, guilty and inexcuſable, before their incenſed Creator? They are received with frowns, "the GOD that made them, has no mercy on them." The Prince of peace, the fountain of felicity, rejects them with abhorrence. He conſigns them over to chains and darkneſs, and receptacles of deſpair; againſt the ſeverer doom, and more public infamy, of the great day. Then all the phials of wrath, will be emptied upon theſe wretched creatures. The law they have violated, and the goſpel they have ſlighted; the power they have defied, and the goodneſs they have abuſed; will all get themſelves honour in their exemplary deſtruction. Then GOD, the GOD to whom vengeance belongeth, will draw the arrow to the very head, and ſet them as the mark of his inexorable diſpleaſure.

RESURRECTION, will be no privilege to them; but immortality itſelf, their everlaſting curſe.—— Would they not bleſs the grave, "that land where all things are forgotten;" and wiſh to lie, eternally hid, in its deepeſt gloom? but the duſt refuſes, to conceal their perſons; or draw a veil, over their practices. They alſo muſt awake; muſt ariſe; muſt appear at the bar; and meet the judge: a judge, before whom "the pillars of heaven tremble, and the earth melts away:" A judge, once long-ſuffering, and very compaſſionate; but now unalterably determined, to teach ſtubborn offenders,—what it is, to provoke the omnipotent godhead: what it is, to trample upon the blood of his Son: and offer deſpite to all the gracious overtures of his ſpirit.

OH! the perplexity! the diſtraction! that muſt confound the impenitent rebels; when they are ſummoned, to the great tribunal! "what can they "do, in this day of ſevere viſitation?" This day of final deciſion?—Where? How? From whence, can

can they find help?—To which of the ſaints will they turn? Whither betake themſelves for ſhelter?—Alas! 'tis all in vain; 'tis all too late—friends and acquaintance know them no more: heaven and earth abandon them, to their approaching doom: and even the mediator, the MEDIATOR himſelf, deſerts them in this dreadful hour.——To fly, will be impracticable: to juſtify themſelves, ſtill more impoſſible: and now, to make any ſupplications, utterly unavailable.

BEHOLD! the books are opened: the ſecrets of all hearts are diſcloſed: the hidden things of darkneſs, are brought to light. How empty, how ineffectual, are all thoſe refined artifices; with which hypocrites impoſed upon their fellow-creatures, and preſerved a character in the ſight of men! the jealous GOD, who has been about their path, and about their bed, and ſpied out all their ways, "ſets before them the things that they have "done." They cannot anſwer him one in a thouſand, nor ſtand in the awful judgment. They are ſpeechleſs with guilt, and ſtigmatized with infamy, before all the angels of light. What a favour would they eſteem it; to hide their aſhamed heads, in the bottom of the ocean; or even to be buried, beneath the ruins of the tottering world!

IF the contempt, poured upon them, be ſo inſupportable; O! "how will their hearts endure." when the ſword of infinite indignation is unſheathed: and fiercely waved, around their defenceleſs heads; or pointed directly, at their naked breaſts! how much the wretches ſcream with wild amazement, and dent the very heavens with their cries, when "the right-aiming thunderbolts go abroad!" go abroad, with a dreadful commiſſion, to drive them from the kingdoms of glory; and plunge them not into the ſorrows of a moment, or the tortures

of

of an hour; but into all the reſtleſs agonies of unquenchable fire, and everlaſting deſpair.*

MISERY of miſeries! too ſhocking for reflection to dwell upon. But, if ſo diſmal to foreſee; and that at a diſtance, together with ſome comfortable expectation of eſcaping it—O! how bitter, how inconceivably bitter, to bear; without any intermiſſion; or any mitigation; through hopeleſs and eternal ages.

WHO has any bowels of pity?—Who has any ſentiments of compaſſion?—Who has any tender concern for his fellow-creatures? Who? In GOD's Name, and for CHRIST's Sake, let him ſhew it; by warning every man, and beſeeching every man, to ſeek the LORD while he may be found: to throw down the arms of rebellion, before the act of indemnity expires: ſubmiſſively to adore the lamb, while he holds out the golden ſceptre.—Here, let us act the friendly part to mankind: here, let the whole force of our benevolence exert itſelf: in exhorting, whomſoever we are likely to influence, to take the wings of faith unfeigned; of repentance undelayed, and "flee away from his wrath to "come."

UPON the whole; what ſtupendous diſcoveries are theſe! lay them up in a faithful remembrance, O my ſoul. Recollect them, with the moſt ſerious attention; when thou lieſt down, and when thou riſeſt up. When thou walkeſt, receive them for thy companions; when thou talkeſt, liſten to them as thy prompters; and whatever thou doeſt, conſult them as thy directors. Influenced by theſe con-

* Regions of ſorrow, doleful ſhades where peace
And reſt can never dwell; hope never comes,
That comes to all: but torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge fed
With ever-burning ſulphur unconſum'd.

conſiderations, thy views will greaten: thy affections be exalted; and thou thyſelf raiſed above the tantalizing power of periſhing things. Duly mindful of theſe, it will be the ſum of thy deſires, and ſcope of thy endeavours, to gain the approbation of that ſovereign being; who will then fill the throne, and pronounce the deciſive ſentence. Thou wilt ſee nothing worth a wiſh*, in compariſon of having his will for thy rule; his glory for thy aim; and his holy ſpirit for thy ever-actuating principle.

WONDER, O man; be loſt in admiration; at thoſe prodigious events, which are coming upon the univerſe: events, the greatneſs of which, nothing finite can meaſure. Such, as will cauſe whatever is conſiderable or momentous, in the annals of all generations, to ſink into littleneſs and nothing: Events (JESUS, prepare us for their approach; defend us, when they take place!) big with the everlaſting fates, of all the living, and all the dead.—I muſt ſee the graves cleaving; the ſea teeming; and ſwarms unſuſpected, crouds unnumbered, yea, multitudes of thronging nations, riſing from both. —I muſt ſee the world in flames; muſt ſtand at the diſſolution of all terreſtrial things; and be an attendant, on the burial of nature.—I muſt ſee the vaſt expanſe of the ſky, wrapt up like a ſcroll; and the incarnate GOD, iſſuing forth from light inacceſſible, with ten thouſand times ten thouſand angels, to judge both men and devils.——I muſt ſee the curtain of time drop; ſee all eternity diſcloſed to view; and enter upon a ſtate of being, that will never, never, have an end.

* Great day of dread, deciſion, and deſpair,
At thought of thee, each ſublunary with
Lets go its eager graſp, and quits the world.
Night Thoughts.

And ought I not (let the vaineſt imagination judge; ought I not) to try the ſincerity of my faith, and take heed to my ways? Is there an inquiry, is there a care; of greater, of equal, of comparable importance?—Is not this an infinitely preſſing call, to ſee that my loins are girded about; my lamp trimmed; and myſelf dreſſed for the "Bridegroom's "appearance?" That, waſhed in the fountain opened in my Saviour's ſide, and clad with the marriage-garment wove by his obedience; I may "be "found in peace, unblamable, and unreprovable." —Otherwiſe, how ſhall I ſtand with boldneſs; when the ſtars of heaven, fall from their orbs? How ſhall I come forth erect and courageous; when the earth itſelf reels to-and-fro like a drunkard*? How ſhall I look up with joy, and ſee my ſalvation drawing nigh; when the hearts of millions fail for fear?

Now, Madam, leſt my Meditations ſet in a cloud, and leave any unpleaſing gloom upon your mind, let me once more turn, to the brightening proſpects of the righteous. A view of them, and their delightful expectations, may ſerve to exhilarate the thoughts, that have been muſing upon melancholy ſubjects, and hovering about the edges of infernal darkneſs: Juſt as a ſpacious field, arrayed in chearful green, relieves and re-invigorates the eye; that has fatigued itſelf by pouring upon ſome minute, or gazing upon ſome glaring object.

The righteous ſeem to lie by, in the boſom of the earth, as a wary pilot in ſome well-ſheltered creek; till all the ſtorms, which infeſt the lower world, are blown over. Here they enjoy ſafe anchorage; are in no danger of foundering, amidſt the ſeas of prevailing iniquity; or of being ſhipwrecked, on the rocks of any powerful temptation. But,

* Iſai. xxiv. 20.

But ere-long, we ſhall behold them hoiſting their flag of hope; riding before a ſweet gale of atoning merit, and redeeming love; till they make, with all the ſails of an aſſured faith, the bleſſed port of eternal life.

THEN, may the honoured friend, to whom I am writing; rich in good works; rich in heavenly tempers; but inexpreſſibly richer in her Saviour's righteouſneſs—O! may ſhe enter the harbour, like a gallant ſtately veſſel; returned ſucceſsful and victorious, from ſome grand expedition; with acclamations, honour, and joy! While my little bark, attendant on the ſolemnity, and a partaker of the triumph, glides humbly after: and both reſt together in the haven,——the wiſhed for, bliſsful haven, of perfect ſecurity, and everlaſting repoſe.

THE END.

REFLECTIONS

ON A

FLOWER-GARDEN.

In a LETTER to a LADY.

I look upon the pleaſure, which we take in a Garden, *as one of the moſt innocent delights in human life. A* Garden *was the habitation of our firſt parents before the fall. It is naturally apt to fill the mind with calmneſs and tranquillity, and to lay all its turbulent paſſions at reſt. It gives us a great inſight into the contrivance and wiſdom of Providence, and* ſuggeſts innumerable ſubjects for Meditation.

Spect. Vol. VII. No. 477.

MADAM,

SOME time ago, my meditations took a turn among the tombs: they viſited the awful and melancholy manſions of the dead:* And you were pleaſed to favour them, with your attention.—May I, now, beg the honour of your company, in a more inviting and delightful excurſion? In a beautiful flower-garden: where I lately walked, and at once regaled the ſenſe, and indulged the fancy.

It

* "Diſcourſes on the vanity of the creature, which "repreſent the barrenneſs of every thing in this world, "and

It was early in a ſummer morning; when the air was cool; the earth moiſt; the whole face of the creation freſh and gay. The noiſy world was ſcarce awake. Buſineſs had not quite ſhook off his ſound ſleep; and riot had but juſt reclined his giddy head. All was ſerene: All was ſtill: Every thing tended to inſpire tranquillity of mind, and invite to ſerious thought.

Only the wakeful lark had left her neſt, and was mounting on high, to ſalute the opening day. Elevated in air, ſhe ſeemed to call the laborious huſbandman to his toil, and all her fellow ſongſters to their notes.——Earlieſt of birds, ſaid I, companion of the dawn, may I always riſe at thy voice! riſe, to offer the matin-ſong; and adore that beneficent being, "who maketh the out-goings of "the morning and evening to rejoice."

O! how charming to rove abroad, at this ſweet hour of prime! to enjoy the calm of Nature; to tread the dewy lawns; and taſte the unrifled freſhneſs of the air!

Sweet is the breath of morn, her riſing ſweet,
With charm of earlieſt birds. *

What a pleaſure do the ſons of ſloth loſe! little, ah! little is the ſluggard ſenſible, how delicious an entertainment he foregoes, for the pooreſt of all animal gratifications.

"and its incapacity of producing any ſolid or ſubſtantial "happineſs, are uſeful———Thoſe ſpeculations alſo, "which ſhew the bright ſide of things, and lay forth "thoſe innocent entertainments, which are to be met "with among the ſeveral objects that encompaſs us, are "no leſs beneficial." Spect. Vol. V. No. 393. Upon the plan of theſe obſervations, the preceding and following reflections are formed.

* Milt. Par. Loſt. B. IV. l. 641.

THE Greyneſs of the dawn decays gradually. Abundance of ruddy ſtreaks, tinge the fleeces of the firmament. Till at length, the dappled aſpect of the eaſt, is loſt in an ardent and univerſal bluſh.—Is it the ſurmiſe of imagination, or do the ſkies really redden with ſhame: to ſee ſo many ſupinely ſtretched, on their drowſy pillows?—ſhall man be loſt, in luxurious eaſe? Shall man waſte theſe precious hours, in idle ſlumbers? While the vigorous ſun is up, and going on his maker's errand? While all the feathered choir are hymning the Creator, and paying their homage in harmony? Oh! no. Let him heighten the melody of the tuneful tribes, by adding the rational ſtrains of devotion. Let him improve the fragrant oblations of nature, by mingling, with the riſing odours, the more refined breath of praiſe.

'TIS natural for man to look upward*; to throw his firſt glance upon the objects, that are above him.

Strait towards heav'n my wond'ring eyes I turn'd,
And gaz'd awhile the ample SKY †.

PRODIGIOUS theatre! where lightnings dart the fire, and thunders utter their voice: where tempeſts ſpend their rage, and worlds unnumbered roll at large!—Oh the greatneſs of that mighty hand; which meteth out this amazing circumference, with a ſpan! Oh the immenſity of that wonderful being; before whom this unmeaſurable extent, is no more than a point!——And Oh (thou pleaſing thought) the unſearchable riches of that mercy, which is ‡ greater than the heavens! Is more extenſive and unbounded, in its gracious exerciſe; than theſe illimitable tracts of air, and ſea, and

* Os homini ſublime dedit, cœlumque tueri
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‡ Pſalm cviii. 4.

and firmament! that pardons crimes of the moſt enormous ſize, and moſt horrid aggravations; pardons them, in conſideration of the Redeemer's atonement, with perfect freeneſs, and the utmoſt readineſs! more readily, if it were poſſible, than this all-ſurrounding expanſe admits, within its circuit, a ridge of mountains, or even a grain of ſand.

O! COME hither, then, ye awakened, trembling ſinners. Come*, weary and heavy-laden with a ſenſe of your iniquities. Condemn yourſelves. Renounce all reliance on any thing of your own. Let your truſt be in the tender mercy of GOD, for ever and ever.

IN them hath he ſet a tabernacle for the ſun.—Behold him coming forth, from the chambers of the eaſt. See! the clouds, like floating curtains, are thrown back at his approach. With what refulgent majeſty does he walk abroad! How tranſ-

 cendently

* The lines that follow, are admirably deſcriptive of the ſpirit and practice hinted above. In them deſire pants; prayer wreſtles; and faith, as it were, graſps the prize.——I take leave to tranſplant them into this place, becauſe they have the misfortune to grow in a very obſcure ſituation. Their native ſoil, is no other than the lamentation of a ſinner, written by Mr. Sternhold. Notwithſtanding the unpromiſing Genius of the performance, I think, we may challenge the greateſt maſters, to produce any thing more ſpirited, and importunate: more full of nature, or more fluſhed with life.

Mercy, good LORD, Mercy I crave;
This is the total ſum;
For mercy, LORD, is all my ſuit;
LORD, let thy mercy come.

The ſhort ſentences—Not a ſingle copulative———— The frequent repetition of the divine name————The almoſt inceſſant reiteration of the bleſſing, ſo earneſtly deſired, ſo infinitely needed.—Theſe are the genuine language of ardour; are beauties obvious to every eye; and

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cendently bright in his countenance; ſhedding day, and inexhauſtible light, through the univerſe! Is there a ſcene, though finiſhed by the moſt elaborate and coſtly refinements of human art, "comparable "to theſe illuſtrious ſolemnities of opening ſun-"ſhine? Before theſe, all the ſtudied pageantry of "the theatre! the glittering œconomy of an aſ-"ſembly; or even the heightened ornaments of "a royal palace; hide their diminiſhed heads, and "ſhrink into nothing."—I have read of a perſon, ſo ſtruck with the ſplendors of this noble luminary; that he imagined himſelf made on purpoſe to contemplate its glories. O! that chriſtians would adopt his perſuaſion, and transfer it to the Sun of righteouſneſs! Thus applied, it would ceaſe to be a chimerical notion, and become a moſt important truth. For ſure I am, it is the ſupreme happineſs, of the eternal ſtate; and therefore may well be the ruling concern, of this preſent life; "to know the only true GOD, "and JESUS CHRIST, whom he hath ſent."—Nor do I ſtand alone in this opinion. One of the moſt unqueſtionable judges, of whatever is valuable in ſcience, or perfective of our nature; a judge, who formed his taſte on the maxims of paradiſe, and received the finiſhings of his education in the third heavens; this judge, determines to know nothing "but JESUS CHRIST, and him crucified." He poſſeſſed, in his own perſon, the fineſt, the moſt admired accompliſhments; and yet pronounces them no better than dung, in compariſon of the * ſupereminent excellency of this ſaving knowledge.

METHINKS, I diſcern a thouſand admirable properties in the ſun. 'Tis, certainly the beſt material emblem of the Creator. There is more of GOD in its luſtre, energy, and uſefulneſs, than in any

and cannot fail, either to pleaſe the judicious taſte, or to edify the gracious heart.

* Το υπερεχον της γνωσεως.

any other viſible being. To worſhip it as a deity, was the leaſt inexcuſable of all the heathen idolatries. One ſcarce can wonder, that fallen reaſon ſhould miſtake ſo fair a copy, for the adorable original. No compariſon, in the whole book of ſacred wiſdom, pleaſes me more; than that which reſembles the bleſſed JESUS, to yonder regent of the day†: Who now advances on his azure road, to ſcatter light and gladneſs through the nations.

WHAT were all the realms of the world, but a dungeon of darkneſs, without the beams of the ſun? All their fine ſcenes, hid under ſhades? loſt in obſcurity.—In vain, we roll around our eyes in the midnight gloom: In vain, we ſtrive to behold the features of amiable nature: Turn whither we will, no form or comelineſs appear: All ſeems a dreary waſte; an undiſtinguiſhed chaos; till the returning hours, have unbarred the gates of light, and let forth the morn.——Then, what a proſpect opens! the heavens are paved with azure, and ſtrewed with roſes. A variety of the livelieſt verdures, array the plains. The flowers put on a glow, of the richeſt colours. The whole creation ſtands forth, dreſſed in all the charms of beauty. The raviſhed eye looks round, and wonders.

AND what had been the condition of our intellectual nature, without the great redeemer, and his divine relation? Alas! What abſurd and unworthy apprehenſions, did the pagan ſages form of GOD! What idle dreams, what childiſh conjectures, were their doctrines of a future ſtate! And how did the bulk, even of that favoured nation, the Jews, weary themſelves in very vanity, to obtain peace and reconciliation with their offended JEHOVAH! Till JESUS aroſe upon our benight-

† Unto you that fear my name, ſhall the ſun of righteouſneſs ariſe, with healing in his wings. Mal. iv. 2.

ed minds, and brought life and immortality to light; till he aroſe, "to enlighten the wretched "Gentiles, and to be the glory of his people Iſ-"rael!"——Now, we no longer cry out, with a reſtleſs impatience, "Where is GOD my maker?" For we are allowed to contemplate the brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon, "in "the face of JESUS CHRIST."—Now, we no longer inquire, with an unſatisfied ſolicitude, "Which "is the way to bliſs?" Becauſe JESUS has marked the path, by his ſhining example; and left us an unerring clue, in his holy word.———Now, we have no more reaſon to proceed with miſgiving hearts, in our journey to eternity; or to aſk anxiouſly, as we go; "Who will roll away the ſtone, "and open the everlaſting doors? Who will re-"move the flaming ſword, and give us admiſſion "into the delights of paradiſe?" For it is done, all done, by the captain of our ſalvation. Sin he has expiated, by the unblemiſhed ſacrifice of himſelf. The law he has fulfilled, by his perfect obedience. The Sinner he transforms, by his ſanctifying SPIRIT.—In a word; he hath both preſented us with a clear diſcovery, of good things to come; and adminiſtered to us an abundant entrance, into the final enjoyment of them.

WHENEVER, therefore, we bleſs GOD for the circling ſeaſons, and revolving day; let us adore, thankfully adore him, for the more precious appearance of the Sun of righteouſneſs, and his glorious goſpel. Without which, we ſhould have been groping, even to this hour, in ſpiritual darkneſs, and the ſhadow of death: without which, we muſt have been bewildered in a maze of inextricable uncertainties; and have "ſtumbled upon the dark "mountains" of error, till we fell into the bottomleſs pit of perdition.

WITH-

WITHOUT that grand enlivening principle, the Sun, what were this earth, but a lifeleſs maſs? a rude lump of inactive matter? The trees could never break forth into leaves, nor the plants ſpring up into flowers. We ſhould no more behold the meadows, mantled over with green; nor the valleys, ſtanding thick with corn. Or, to ſpeak in the beautiful language of a prophet, "* No longer would "the fig-tree bloſſom, nor fruit be on the vine: "the labour of the olive would fail, and the fields "could yield no meat: the flocks muſt be cut off "from the fold, and there would be no herd in the "ſtalls." This darts its beams among all the vegetable tribes; and paints the ſpring, and enriches the autumn. This pierces to the roots of the vineyard, and the orchard; and ſets afloat thoſe fermenting juices, which at length burſt into floods of wine, or bend the boughs with a mellow load.—Nor are its favours confined to the upper regions; but diſtributed even unto the deepeſt receſſes of creation. It penetrates the beds of metals, and find its way to "the "place of the ſapphires." It tinctures the ſeeds of gold, that are ripening into ore; and throws a brilliancy into the water of the diamond, that is hardening on its rock.—In ſhort; the beneficial agency of this magnificent luminary, is inexpreſſible. It beautifies, and impregnates, univerſal nature. "There "is nothing hid from the heat thereof."

JUST in the ſame manner, were the rational world dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, without the reviving energy of JESUS CHRIST. He is "the re-"ſurrection, and the life:" The all-powerful cauſe of the one, and overflowing fountain of the other. "The ſecond Adam is a quickening ſpirit," and all his ſaints live through him. He ſhines upon their affections; and they ſhoot forth into heavenly graces,

* Hab. iii. 17.

graces, and abound in the fruits of righteouſneſs. Faith unfeigned, and love undiſſembled, thoſe nobleſt productions of the renewed nature, are the effect of his operations on the mind. Not ſo much as one divine diſpoſition could ſpread itſelf, not one chriſtian habit unfold and flouriſh, without the kindly influences of his grace.

As there is no fruitfulneſs, ſo likewiſe no chearfulneſs*, without the ſun.——When that auſpicious ſovereign of the day, diffuſes the mildneſs of his morning ſplendors; all creatures are enlivened by his preſence, are gladdened with his gifts. Millions of glittering inſects awake into exiſtence, and baſk in his rays. The birds ſtart from their ſlumbers, and pour their delighted ſouls in harmony. The flocks, with bleating accents, hail the welcome bleſſing. The herds, in lowing murmurs, expreſs their hoarſer acclamations. The valleys ring with rural muſic: the hills echo back the artleſs ſtrains. All that is vocal, joins in the general choir: all that has breath, exults in the chearing influence.—Whereas, let that radiant orb be eclipſed, only for a few minutes; and all nature, immediately, aſſumes an air of ſadneſs. The heavens put on a kind of mourning. The moſt ſprightly animals droop their wings, or hang down their dejected heads. The ſongſters of the grove are ſtruck dumb. The voice of joy ceaſes. Howling beaſts roam abroad for prey: Ominous birds come forth and ſcreech: the heart of man fails, and a chilling horror ſeizes the forboding mind.—So, when CHRIST hides away his face; when faith loſes ſight of that conſolation of Iſrael; Oh! how gloomy are the proſpects of the ſoul! our GOD ſeems

* "The ſun, which is as the great ſoul of the uni-
" verſe, and produces all the neceſſaries of life, has a
" particular influence in chearing the mind of man, and
" making the heart glad." Spect. Vol. V. No. 387.

ſeems to be a conſuming fire, and our ſins cry loudly for vengeance. The thoughts bleed inwardly; the chriſtian walks heavily: all without is irkſome; all within is diſconſolate.—Lift up then, moſt gracious JESUS, thou nobler day-ſpring from on high! O lift up the light of thy countenance, upon thy people! Reveal the fulneſs of thy mediatorial ſufficiency; make clear our title to this great ſalvation; and thereby impart

What nothing earthly gives, or can deſtroy,
The ſoul's calm ſun-ſhine, and the heart-felt Joy. Pope.

IN one inſtance more, let me purſue the ſimilitude. The ſun, I obſerve, ſhoots his beams every way; both backwards and forwards; to every point in the compaſs, as well as to every quarter under heaven. The eaſt reddens, with his riſing radiance; and the weſtern hills are gilded with his ſtreaming ſplendors. The chilly regions of the north, are cheared by his genial warmth; while the ſouthern tracts, glow with his fire.—Thus, are the influence of the Sun of righteouſneſs, diffuſive and unconfined. The generations of old felt them; and generations yet unborn, will rejoice in them. The merits of his precious death extended to the firſt, and will be propagated to the laſt ages of mankind.——May they, ere long, viſit the remoteſt climates, and darkeſt corners of the earth! Command thy goſpel, bleſſed JESUS, thy everlaſting goſpel, to take the wings of the morning, and travel with yonder ſun. Let it fly upon ſtrong pinions among every people, nation, and language: that where the heat broils, and the cold freezes, thou mayeſt be known, confeſſed, and adored: That ſtrangers to thy name, and enemies to thy doctrines, may be enlightened with the knowledge, and won to the love, of thy Truth! O!

may

may that beſt of æras come; that wiſhed for period advance; when "All the ends of the world ſhall "remember themſelves, and be turned unto the "LORD; and all the kindreds of the nations wor-"ſhip before him!"

FROM the heavens, we retired to the earth.—— Here, the drops of dew, like ſo many liquid cryſtals*, ſparkle upon the eye. How brilliant, and unſullied, is their luſtre! How little inferior to the proud ſtone, that irradiates a monarch's crown! They want nothing but ſolidity and permanency; to equal them with the fineſt treaſures, of the jeweller's caſket.— But here, indeed, they are greatly deficient; ſhort-lived ornaments; poſſeſſed of little more, than a momentary radiancy. The ſun, that lights them up, will ſoon exhale them. Within another hour, we may "look for their place, and they ſhall be away." —Oh! may every good reſolution of mine, and of my flocks; may our united breathings after GOD, not be like theſe tranſient decorations of the morning; but like the ſubſtantial glories of the growing day! Theſe ſhine more and more, with augmented ſplendors; while thoſe, having glittered gaily for a little while, diſappear, and are loſt.

HOW ſenſibly has this dew refreſhed the vegetable kingdoms! The fervent heat of yeſterday's ſun, had almoſt parched the face, and exhauſted the ſweets of nature. But, what a ſovereign reſtorative, are theſe cooling diſtillations of the night! How they gladden, and invigorate, the languiſhing herbs! Sparkled with theſe reviving drops, their verdure deepens; their bloom is new-fluſhed; their fragrance, faint or intermitted, becomes potent

* Now morn, her roſy ſteps in th' eaſtern clime
Advancing, ſow'd the earth with orient pearl.
Milt.

tent and copious.—So, does the ever-bleſſed SPIRIT revive the drooping troubled conſcience of a ſinner. When that almighty comforter ſheds his ſweet influence on the ſoul; diſplays the all-ſufficient ſacrifice of a Divine Redeemer; and "witneſſes with our Spirit," that we are intereſted in the Saviour, and, by this means, are children of GOD; then, what a pleaſing change enſues! Former anxieties are remembered no more. Every uneaſy apprehenſion vaniſhes. Soothing hopes, and delightful expectations, ſucceed. The countenance drops its dejected mien; the eyes brighten with a lively chearfulneſs; while the lips expreſs the heart-felt ſatisfaction, in the language of thankſgiving, and the voice of melody.—In this ſenſe, merciful GOD, be as the dew unto Iſrael! "Pour "upon them the continual dew of thy bleſſing." And oh! let not my fleece be dry, while heavenly benediction deſcends upon all around.

WHO can number theſe pearly drops? They hang on every hedge; twinkle from every ſpray; and adorn the whole herbage of the field. Not a blade of graſs, not a ſingle leaf, but wears theſe watery pendants. So vaſt is the profuſion, that it baffles the arithmetician's art.———Here let the benevolent breaſt contemplate, with delight, that emphatical ſcripture; which deſcribes the increaſe of the Meſſiah's kingdom, from this elegant ſimilitude. The royal prophet, ſpeaking of CHRIST, and foretelling the ſucceſs of his religion, has this remarkable expreſſion*, The dew of thy birth is of

* Pſalm cx. 3. טַלְדָתְךָ קִשְׁחָךְ לְךָ טַל יַלְדֻתֶךָ. The moſt exact tranſlation of this difficult paſſage is, I apprehend, as follows; præ rore uteri auroræ, tibi eſt ros juventulis vel prolis tuæ. The dew of thy birth is larger, more copious, than the dew which proceeds from the womb of the morning—I cannot acquieſce in the

of the womb of the morning; (i. e.) As the morning is the mother of dews; produces them, as it were,

the new verſion; becauſe that disjoins the womb of the morning, from—The dew of thy birth: Whereas they ſeem to have a clear affinity, and cloſe connection. The womb of the morning is with abundance of elegance, applied to the conception and protection of dews; agreeably to a delicate line, in that great maſter of juſt deſcription, and lively painting, Mr. Thomſon:

The meek-ey'd morn appears, mother of dews.

Summer.

Job, I remember, hath a fine expreſſion, that may ſerve to confirm this remark, and illuſtrate the propriety of the phraſe uſed in this connection: "Hath the rain a father, or who hath begotten the drops of dew?" It ſeems, the oriental writers delighted to repreſent the dew, as a kind of birth, as the offspring of the morning. And if ſo, ſurely there could be no image in the whole compaſs of the univerſe, better adapted to the pſalmiſt's purpoſe; or more ſtrongly ſignificant of thoſe multitudes of proſelytes which were "born, not of blood, nor of the will of the fleſh, nor of the will of man, but of God;" by the powerful energy of his word and ſpirit. ——Upon this ſuppoſition, the whole verſe deſcribes

The willing ſubjection,
The gracious accompliſhments, } of Chriſt's Converts.
And the vaſt number,

q. d. In the day of thy power, when thy glorious goſpel ſhall be publiſhed in the world, and accompanied with marvellous efficacy——In that memorable period, thy people, diſcontinuing the former oblations, commanded under the moſaic law; ſhall devote themſelves, as ſo many living ſacrifices, to thy honour. Not conſtrained by force, but charmed with thy excellency, they ſhall come in volunteers to thy ſervice, and be free-will-offerings in thy church.—Neither ſhall they be "empty vines", or bare profeſſors; but ſhall walk in all the beauties of holineſs, and bring forth ſuch amiable fruit, as will adorn the doctrine they embrace.——And, what is

ſtill

were, from a prolific womb; and ſcatters them with the moſt laviſh abundance, over all the ſurface

ſtill more deſirable, they ſhall be as numerous, as they are willing and holy. Born to thee in numbers, even more immenſe and inconceivable, than the drops of dew, which are begotten by the night, and iſſue from the womb of the recent morning.

By this interpretation, the text, I think, is cleared of its obſcurity, and appears both truly ſublime, and perfectly juſt.

May I be pardoned the digreſſion, and acquitted from preſumption, if, on this occaſion, I take leave to animadvert upon what ſeems harſh and unnatural in the common expoſition of the laſt verſe of this pſalm? All the commentators (at leaſt, all that I have had opportunity to conſult) inform their readers, that to drink of the brook in the way, ſignifies to undergo ſufferings and death: Which in my opinion, is a conſtruction extremely forced, and hardly ſupportable; altogether remote from the import of ſuch poetical forms of diction, uſual among the eaſtern nations. In thoſe ſultry climes, nothing in the world could be more welcome to the traveller, than a brook ſtreaming near his paths. To quench his thirſt, and lave his feet in the cooling current, was one of the greateſt refreſhments imaginable, and re-animated him to purſue his journey. For which reaſon, among others, Brooks are a very favourite image with the inſpired penman; uſed to denote a ſituation fertile and delightful, or a ſtate of pleaſure and ſatisfaction; but never, that I can recollect, to picture out the contrary condition of tribulation and diſtreſs.

The water-floods, indeed, in the ſacred writings, often repreſent ſome imminent danger, or grevious affliction. But then they are not—נַהֲלִים נִרְדָּד—Streams ſo calm, that they keep within their banks, and glide quietly by the traveller's footſteps; ſo clear, that they are fit for the way-faring man's uſe, and invite his lips to a draught; both which notions are plainly implied in the text—They are rather——מִשְׁבְּרֵי——boiſterous billows; burſting over a ſhip, or daſhing themſelves, with dreadful

face of the Earth: ſo ſhall thy ſeed be, O thou everlaſting father! By the preaching of thy word, ſhall

dreadful impetuoſity, upon the ſhore: or—שִׁבֹּלֶת—ſweeping inundations that drown the neighbouring country, and bear down all before them——beſides, in theſe inſtances of horror, we never find the word——ישרזה "He ſhall drink;" which conveys a pleaſing idea (unleſs when it relates to a cup filled with bitter, intoxicating, or impoiſoned liquors; a caſe quite different from that under conſideration); but either——געת——which imports terror and aſtoniſhment, or elſe——שמק and עגד——which ſignify to ruſh upon, to overwhelm, and even to bury under the waves.

Upon the whole, may not the paſſage more properly allude to the influences of the Holy Ghoſt? which were communicated in unmeaſurable degrees to our great high-prieſt; and were, in fact, the cauſe of his ſurmounting all difficulties——theſe are frequently repreſented by waters; "Whoſo believeth on me, out of "his belly ſhall flow rivers of living waters." And the enjoyment of them is deſcribed by drinking; "He "that drinketh of the water that I ſhall give him, ſhall "never thirſt."—Then the ſenſe may run in this well-connected and perſpicuous manner. If it be aſked, how ſhall the Redeemer be able to execute the various and important offices foretold in the preceding parts of the pſalm? the prophet replies, "he ſhall drink of the brook in the way." He ſhall not be left barely to his human nature, which muſt unavoidably ſink under the tremendous work of recovering a loſt world; but, through the whole courſe of his incarnate ſtate, thro' the whole adminiſtration of his mediatorial kingdom, ſhall be ſupported with omnipotent ſuccours. He ſhall drink at the brook of Almighty Power, and travel on in the greatneſs of an uncreated ſtrength———Therefore ſhall he lift up his head. By this means ſhall he be equal to the prodigious teſt, and ſuperior to all oppoſition. By this means ſhall he be thoroughly ſucceſsful in whatever he undertakes, and greatly triumphant over all his enemies.

ſhall ſuch an innumerable race of regenerate children be born unto thee, and fill all lands. Millions, millions of willing Converts, ſhall croud into thy family, and repleniſh thy Church; till they become like the ſtars of heaven, or the ſands of the ſea, for multitude; or even as numberleſs as theſe fine ſpangles, which now cover the face of nature.———Behold then, ye obſtinately wicked, though you "are not gathered, yet will the Savi-"our be glorious." His deſign ſhall not miſcarry, nor his labour prove abortive; tho' you render it of none effect, with regard to yourſelves. Think not, that IMMANUEL will want believers, or Heaven inhabitants, becauſe you continue incorrigible. No; the lamb that was ſlain, will "ſee of the "travail of his ſoul, and be ſatisfied;" in a never failing ſeries of faithful people below, and an immenſe choir of glorified Saints above: who ſhall form his retinue, and ſurround his throne, in ſhining and triumphant armies, ſuch as no man can number.

HERE, I was reminded of the various expedients which providence, unſearchably wiſe, uſes, to fructify both the material and intellectual world.——Sometimes, you ſhall have impetuous and heavy ſhowers, burſting from the angry clouds. They laſh the plains, and make the rivers foam. A ſtorm brings them, and a deluge follows them.—At other times, theſe gentle dews are formed, in the ſerene evening air: They ſteal down by ſoft degrees, and with inſenſible ſtillneſs: ſo ſubtle, that they deceive the niceſt eye; ſo ſilent, that they eſcape the moſt delicate ear.——Yet, theſe very different operations, concur in the ſame beneficial end; and impart fertility to the lap of nature.——So, ſome have I known, reclaimed from the unfruitful works of darkneſs, by violent and ſevere means. The Almighty addreſſed their ſtubborn hearts, as he addreſſed

dreſſed the Iſraelites at Sinai, with lightning in his eyes, and thunder in his voice. The mind, ſmit with a ſenſe of guilt, and apprehenſive of eternal vengeance, trembled through all her powers; juſt as that ſtrong mountain tottered to its centre. Pangs and agonies preceded their new birth. They travailed in pain, and were reduced to the ſoreſt extremities, before they found reſt to their ſouls.—Others have been recovered from a vain converſation, by methods more mild and attractive. The father of ſpirits applied himſelf to their tender conſciences, in "a ſtill and ſmall voice." His grace came down, as the rain into a fleece of wool; or as theſe ſoftening drops, that now water the earth. The kingdom of GOD took place in their hearts, without noiſe or obſervation. They paſſed from death unto life, from a carnal to a regenerate ſtate, by almoſt imperceptible advances. The tranſition reſembled the growth of corn: was very viſible, when affected; though ſcarce ſenſible, while accompliſhing.—O thou author and finiſher of our faith, recall us from our wanderings, and re-unite us to thyſelf! Whether thou alarm us with thy terrors, or allure us with thy ſmiles: whether thou drive us with the ſcourges of conviction, or draw us with the cords of love: let us, in any-wiſe, return to thee; for thou art our ſupreme good; thou art our only happineſs.

BEFORE I proceed further, let me aſcend the terrace, and take one ſurvey of the neighbouring country.—O! What a proſpect ruſhes upon my ſight! How vaſt; how various; how "full and plenteous "with all manner of ſtore!" Nature's whole wealth!——What a rich and inexhauſtible magazine is here; furniſhing ſubſiſtence for every creature! Methinks, I read, in theſe ſpacious volumes, a moſt lively comment, upon that noble celebration of

of the Divine Beneficence; "he openeth his hand, "and filled all things living with plenteouſneſs."

Theſe are thy glorious works, parent of good,
Almighty! Thine this univerſal frame,
Thus wond'rous fair! Thyſelf how wond'rous then!
MILT.

THE fields are covered deep, and ſtand thick, with corn. They expand the milky grain to the ſun, in order to receive from his beams a more firm conſiſtence, and a golden hue: that they may be qualified to fill the huſbandman's barn with plenty, and his heart with gladneſs.

YONDER lie the meadows, ſmoothed into a perfect level; decorated with an embroidery of the gayeſt flowers; and loaded with * ſpontaneous crops of herbage; which, converted into hay, will prove a moſt commodious proviſion for the barrenneſs of winter; will ſupply with fodder our ſerviceable animals, when all the verdure of the plain is killed by froſts, or buried in ſnows.——A winding ſtream glides along the flowery margin, and receives the image of the bending ſkies, and waters the roots of many a branching willow. 'Tis ſtocked, no doubt, with variety of fiſh, that afford a ſolitary diverſion to the angler, and nouriſh for his table a delicious treat. Nor is it the only merit of this liquid element, to maintain the finny nations; it alſo carries cleanlineſs, and diſpenſes fruitfulneſs, wherever it rolls the cryſtal current.

THE paſtures, with their verdant mounds, chequer the proſpect: and prepare a ſtanding repaſt for our cattle. There, "our oxen are made ſtrong "to labour; and our ſheep bring forth thouſands, "and ten thouſands." There, the horſe acquires vigour for the diſpatch of our buſineſs, and ſpeed to

* ——Injuſſa vireſcunt
Gramina——

to expedite our journeys. From thence, the kine bring home their udders, diſtended with one of the richeſt, and healthieſt liquors, in the world.

On ſeveral ſpots, a grove of trees like ſome grand colonnade, erects its towering head. Every one projects a friendly ſhade, for the beaſts; and creates a hoſpitable lodging, for the birds. Every one ſtands ready, to furniſh timber for a palace; maſts for a navy; or, with a more condeſcending courteſy, fuel for our hearths.——One of them ſeems ſkirted with a wild uncultivated heath; which, like well-diſpoſed ſhades in painting, throws an additional luſtre on the more ornamented parts of the landſcape. Nor is its uſefulneſs, like that of a ſoil, relative only, but real. There, ſeveral valuable creatures are produced, and accommodated; without any expence, or care of ours. There, likewiſe, ſpring abundance of thoſe herbs, which aſſuage the ſmart of our wounds, and allay the fiery tumults of the fever; which impart floridity to our circulating fluids; add a more vigorous tone to our active ſolids; and, thereby, repair the decays of our enfeebled conſtitution.

Nearer the houſes, one perceives a ſpacious ſpread of branches; not ſo ſtately as the oaks, but more amiable for their annual ſervices. A little while ago, I beheld them; and all was one beauteous, boundleſs, waſte of bloſſoms. The eye marvelled at the lovely ſight; and the heart rejoiced, in the proſpect of autumnal plenty. But now, the blooming maid is reſigned, for the uſeful matron: The flower is fallen, and the fruit ſwells out on every twig.——Breathe ſoft, ye winds! Oh, ſpare the tender fruitage, ye ſurly blaſts! Let the pear-tree ſuckle her juicy progeny; till they drop into our hands, and diſſolve in our mouths. Let the plum hang unmoleſted upon her boughs; till ſhe fatten her delicious fleſh, and cloud her poliſhed ſkin with

with blue. And as for the apples, that ſtaple commodity of our orchards, let no injurious ſhocks precipitate them immaturely to the ground; till revolving ſuns, have tinged them with a ruddy complexion, and concocted them into an exquiſite flavour. Then, what innumerable claſſes, of what burniſhed rinds, and what delighted reliſhes, will repleniſh the ſtore-room! Some to preſent us with an early entertainment, and refreſh our palates amidſt the ſultry heats; ſome, to borrow ripeneſs from the falling ſnows, and carry autumn into the depths of winter: Some, to adorn the ſalver, make a part of the deſſert, and give an agreeable * cloſe to our feaſts: Others, to fill our vats with a foaming flood; which, mellowed by age, may ſparkle in the glaſs, with a livelineſs and delicacy, little inferior to the blood of the grape.

I OBSERVE ſeveral ſmall incloſures, which ſeem to be apprehenſive of ſome hoſtile viſit from the north; and, therefore, are defended, on that quarter, by a thick wood, or a lofty wall: at the ſame time, they cultivate an uninterrupted correſpondence with the ſouth; and throw open their whole dimenſions, to its friendly warmth. One, in particular, lies, within the reach of a diſtinguiſhing view; and proves to be an olitory. It looks, methinks, like a plain and frugal republic. Whatever may reſemble the pomp of courts, or the enſigns of royalty, is baniſhed from this humble community. None of the productions of the kitchen-garden affect finery, but all are habited with perfect decency. Here, thoſe celebrated qualities are eminently united. The utmoſt ſimplicity with the exacteſt neatneſs †.——A ſkilful hand has parcelled out the whole ground, into narrow beds, and intervening

* ——— Ab ovo
Uſque ad mala——— Hor.
† Simplex munditiis. Hor.

intervening alleys. The ſame diſcreet management has aſſigned to each family, a proper and diſtinct abode. So that there is no confuſion, amidſt a great multitude; becauſe every individual is aſſociated with propriety, and all the tribes are ranged with regularity.—But, if it be pleaſing to behold their orderly ſituation, and their modeſt beauties; how delightful, to conſider the advantages, they yield! What a fund of choice accommodations is here! What a ſource of wholeſome dainties! and all, for the enjoyment of man. Why does the parſley, with her frizzled locks, ſhagg the border, or why the celery, with her whitening arms, perforate the mould; but to render his ſoups ſavoury? The aſparagus ſhoots its tapering ſtems, to offer him the firſt-fruits of the ſeaſon; and the artichoak ſpreads its turgid top, in order to give him a treat of vegetable marrow. The tendrils of the * cucumber creep into the ſun; and, though baſking in its hotteſt rays, they ſecret for their maſter, and barrel up for his uſe, the moſt cooling juices of the ſoil. The beans ſtand firm, like files of embattled troops; the peaſe reſt upon their props, like ſo many companions of invalids; while both repleniſh their pods with the fatneſs of the earth, on purpoſe to pour it on their owner's table.—Not one ſpecies, among all this variety of herbs, is a cumberer of the ground. Not a ſingle plant,

* Virgil, with great conciſeneſs, and equal propriety, deſcribes the cucumber,

———Tortuſque per herbam
Creſceret in ventrem. Cucumis—

Milton has (if we admit Dr. Bently's alteration, which is, I think, in this place, unqueſtionably juſt) almoſt tranſlated the Latin poet.

————Forth crept
The ſwelling gourd————

Georg. IV. Par. Loſt. B. VII. l. 320.

plant, but is good for food, or ſome way ſalutary. And with ſo beneficent an œconomy are the ſeveral periods of their miniſtration ſettled, that no portion of the year is left deſtitute of ſuch nouriſhing eſculents as are beſt ſuited to the temperature of the air, and the ſtate of our bodies.—O! why ſhould the poſſeſſor of ſo valuable a ſpot envy the condition of kings?* Since he may daily walk amidſt rows of peaceable and obſequious ſubjects. Every one of which tenders him ſome agreeable preſent, and pays him a willing tribute. Such as is moſt excellently adapted, both to ſupply his wants, and to regale his taſte: to furniſh him at once with plenty and with pleaſure.

At a diſtance one deſcries the mighty hills: they heave their huge ridges among the clouds, and look like the barriers of kingdoms, or the boundaries of nature. Bare and deformed as their ſurface may appear, their bowels are fraught with inward treaſures; treaſures, lodged faſt in the quarries, or ſunk deep in the mines. From thence induſtry may draw her implements, to plow the ſoil, to reap the grain, and procure every neceſſary convenience. From thence art may fetch her materials, to rear the dome, to ſwell the organ, and form the nobleſt ornaments of politer life.

On another ſide the great deep terminates the view. "There go the ſhips: there is that leviathan;" and there, in that world of waters, an inconceivable number of animals have their habitation. This is the capacious ciſtern of the univerſe, that admits as into a receptacle, and

 diſtributes,

* Hic rarum tamen in dumis olus, albaque cirum
Lilia, verbenaſque premens, veſcumque papaver,
Regum æquabat opes animis: ſeraque revertens
Nocte domum, dapibus menſas onerabat inemptis.
Virg. Georg. IV. l. 130.

diſtributes as from a reſervoir, whatever waters the whole globe. There is not a fountain that guſhes in the unfrequented deſart, not a rivulet that flows in the remoteſt continent, not a cloud that ſwims in the higheſt regions of the firmament, but is fed by this all-repleniſhing ſource.—The ocean is the grand vehicle of trade, and the uniter of diſtant nations: to us it is peculiarly kind, not only as it wafts into our ports the harveſt of every climate, renders our iſland the centre of traffic, but alſo as it ſecures us from foreign invaſions, by a ſort of impregnable entrenchment.*

METHINKS, the view of this profuſe munificence inſpires a ſecret delight, and kindles a diſintereſted good will.—While the "little hills clap their hands," and the luxuriant "valleys laugh and ſing;" who can forbear catching the general joy? Who is not touched with lively ſenſations of pleaſure?—While the everlaſting father is ſcattering bleſſings through his whole family, and crowning the year with his goodneſs; who does not feel his breaſt overflowing with

* Whoſe rampart was the ſea. Nahum iii. 8.

I hope, this little excurſion into the country, will not be looked upon as a departure from my ſubject; becauſe a rural view, though no eſſential part of a garden, is yet neceſſary to complete its beauty.—As uſefulneſs is the moſt valuable property that can attend any production, this is the circumſtance chiefly touched upon in the ſurvey of the landſcape. Though every piece of this extenſive and diverſified ſcene is caſt in the moſt elegant mould, yet nothing is calculated merely for ſhew and parade. You ſee nothing formed in the taſte of the oſtentatious obeliſk, or inſignificant pomp of the pyramid. No ſuch idle expences were admitted into that conſummate plan which regulated the ſtructure of the univerſe. All the decorations of nature are no leſs advantageous than ornamental; ſuch as ſpeak the Maker infinitely beneficent, as well as incomparably magnificent.

with a diffuſive benevolence?—My heart, I muſt confeſs, beats high with ſatisfaction; and breathes out congratulatory wiſhes, upon all the tenants of theſe rural abodes: "Peace be within your walls, "as well as plenteouſneſs around your dwellings." Live, ye highly favoured; live ſenſible of your benefits, and thankful to your benefactor. Look round upon theſe prodigiouſly large incomes of the fruitful ſoil, and call them (for you have free leave) all your own.—Only let me remind you of one very important truth. Let me ſuggeſt, and may you never forget, that you are obliged to CHRIST JESUS, for every one of theſe accommodations, which ſpring from the teeming earth, and ſmiling ſkies: For,

1. CHRIST † made them, when they were not. ——He fetched them up from utter darkneſs; and gave them both their being, and their beauty. He

† When I aſcribe the work of creation to the SON, I am far, very far, from offering to exclude the eternal FATHER, and everlaſting SPIRIT, from the ſame honour. The acts of theſe inconceivable glorious perſons are, like their eſſence, undivided and one. But I chuſe to ſtate the important point in this manner, becauſe this is the manifeſt doctrine of the New Teſtament; the expreſs belief of our church; and a moſt noble peculiarity of the Goſpel Revelation. I chuſe it alſo, becauſe I would take every opportunity of inculcating, and celebrating the divinity of the REDEEMER; a truth that imparts an unutterable dignity to Chriſtianity: a truth which lays a moſt immoveable foundation for all the comfortable hopes of a Chriſtian: a truth which will render the myſtery of our redemption, the wonder and delight of eternity; and with this truth, every one will obſerve, my aſſertion is inſeparably connected.

If any one queſtions, whether this be the doctrine of our church; let the Creed, which we repeat in our moſt ſolemn devotions, determine his doubt: "I believe," ſays that form of ſound words, "in one LORD JESUS

created the materials of which they are compoſed; and moulded them into this endleſs multiplicity of amiable forms and uſeful ſubſtances. He arrayed the heavens with a veſture of the mildeſt blue; and cloathed the earth in a livery of the gayeſt green: his pencil ſtreaked, and his breath perfumed, whatever is beautiful and fragrant in the univerſe. His ſtrength ſet faſt the mountains, his goodneſs garniſhed the vales, and the ſame touch, that healed the leper, wrought the whole viſible ſyſtem into this complete perfection.

2. CHRIST recovered them when they were forfeited. By Adam's ſin we loſt our right to the comforts of life, and fruits of the ground: his diſobedience was the moſt impious and horrid treaſon againſt the King of kings; conſequently, his whole patrimony became confiſcated; as well the portion of temporal good things, ſettled upon the human race during their minority; as that everlaſting heritage reſerved for their enjoyment, when they ſhould come to full age. But the "ſeed of "the woman," inſtantly interpoſing, took off the attainder, and redeemed the alienated inheritance. The firſt Adam being diſinherited, the ſecond Adam* was appointed heir of all things, viſible as well as inviſible:

"JESUS CHRIST, very GOD of very GOD, by "whom all things were made."—If it be farther inquired, from whence the Nicene fathers derived this article of their faith? I anſwer, from the writings of the beloved diſciple who lay on the Saviour's boſom; and of that great apoſtle who was caught up into the third heaven. John i. 3. Coloſſ. i. 16.

* Heb. i. 2.—In this ſenſe, at leaſt, Chriſt is the Saviour of all men. The former and latter rain; the precious fruits of the earth, food to eat, and raiment to put on—all theſe he purchaſed even for his irreclaimable

inviſible: and we hold our poſſeſſion of the one; we expect an inſtatement in the other; purely by virtue of our alliance to him, and our union with him.

3. CHRIST upholds them, which would otherwiſe tumble into ruin——By him, ſays the Oracle of Inſpiration, all things conſiſt. § His finger rolls the ſeaſons round, and preſides over all the celeſtial revolutions. His finger winds up the wheels, and impels every ſpring, of vegetative nature. In a word, the whole weight of the creation reſts upon his mighty arm, and receives the whole harmony of its motion from his unerring eye.—— This habitable globe, with all its rich appendages,

claimable enemies. They eat of his bread who lift up their heel againſt him.

We learn from hence, in what a peculiar and endearing light, the Chriſtian is to contemplate the things that are ſeen. Heathens might diſcover an eternal power, and infinite wiſdom, in the ſtructure of the univerſe: heathens might acknowledge a moſt ſtupendous liberality, in the unreſerved grant of the whole fabric, with all its furniture, to the ſervice of man. But the Chriſtian ſhould ever keep in mind his forfeiture of them, and the price paid to redeem them. He ſhould receive the gifts of indulgent providence, as the Iſraelites received the law, from the hand of a mediator: or rather, to him they ſhould come, not only iſſuing from the ſtores of an unbounded bounty, but ſwimming (as it were) in that crimſon tide which ſtreamed from Immanuel's veins.

§ Col. i. 17. I beg leave to ſubjoin St. Chryſoſtom's pertinent and beautiful note upon the paſſage; by which it will appear, that the ſentiment of theſe ſections is not merely a private opinion, but the avowed belief of the primitive church. Τῦτ᾽ ἐϛιν, ſays the eloquent father, εἰς αὐτον χρῆμαται ἡ παντων ὑποϛασις· ϗ μονον αὐτος αὐτα ἐκ τϗ μὴ ὀντος εἰς το εἶναι παρηγαγεν, ἀλλα και αὐτος αὐτα συγκρατει νυν· ὡϛε ἂν ἀποϛασθῃ της αὐτϗ προνοιας, ἀπολωλε και διεφθαρται.

and fine machinery, could no more continue, than they could create themſelves. Start they would into inſtant confuſion, or drop into their primitive nothing, did not his power ſupport, and his wiſdom regulate them every moment. In conformity to his will, they ſubſiſt ſtedfaſt and invariable in their orders, and wait only for his ſovereign nod, to "fall away like water that runneth apace."

4. CHRIST * actuates them, which would otherwiſe be lifeleſs and inſignificant.—Penſioners they are, conſtant penſioners, on his bounty, and borrow their all from his fulneſs. He only has life: and whatever operates, operates by an emanation from his all-ſufficiency. Does the grape refreſh you, with its enlivening juices? It is by a warrant received, and virtue derived, from the Redeemer. Does bread ſtrengthen your heart, and prove the ſtaff of your life? Remember, that it is by the Saviour's appointment, and through the efficacy of his operation. You are charmed with his melody, when the "time of ſinging of birds is come, and "the voice of the nightingale is heard in your "land." You taſte his goodneſs in the luſcious fig, the melting peach, and the muſky flavour of the apricot. You ſmell his ſweetneſs in the opening honeyſuckle, and every odoriferous ſhrub. Could theſe creatures ſpeak for themſelves, they would, doubtleſs, diſclaim all ſufficiency of their own,

* John v. 17. My father worketh hitherto, and I work; i. e. I exert that unremitting and unwearied energy, which is the life of the creation.—Thus the words are paraphraſed by a maſterly expoſitor, who has illuſtrated the life of our bleſſed LORD, in the moſt elegant taſte of criticiſm: with the moſt amiable ſpirit of devotion; and without any mixture of the malignant leaven, or low ſingularities of a party. See the Family Expoſitor, Vol. I. Sect. 47.

own, and aſcribe the whole honour to their Maker. —"We are ſervants," would they ſay, "of HIM, "who died for you. Ciſterns only, dry ciſterns "in ourſelves, we tranſmit to mortals no more, "than the uncreated fountain transfuſes into us. "Think not that, from any ability of our own, "we furniſh you with aſſiſtance, or adminiſter to "your comfort. 'Tis the divine energy, the di- "vine energy alone, that works in us, and does "you good.—We ſerve you, O ye ſons of men, that "you may love him who placed us in theſe ſtations. "O! love the LORD, therefore, all ye who are "ſupported by our miniſtry; or elſe we ſhall † "groan with indignation, and regret at your "abuſe of our ſervices.—Uſe us, and welcome, "for we are yours, if ye are CHRIST's. Crop our "choiceſt beauties, rifle all our treaſures, accom- "modate yourſelves with our moſt valuable qua- "lities; only let us be incentives to gratitude, and "motives to obedience."

HAVING gazed the ſpacious ſky, and ſent a glance round the inferior creation, 'tis time to deſcend from this eminence, and confine my attention to the beautiful ſpot below——Here nature, always pleaſing, every where lovely, appears with peculiar attractions. Yonder ſhe ſeems dreſſed in her diſhabille, grand but irregular. Here ſhe calls in her handmaid art, and ſhines in all the delicate ornaments that the niceſt cultivation can convey. Thoſe are her common apartments, where ſhe lodges her ordinary gueſts; this is her cabinet of curioſities, where ſhe entertains her intimate acquaintance—— My eye ſhall often expatiate over thoſe ſcenes of univerſal fertility: my feet ſhall ſometimes bruſh thro' the thicket, or traverſe the lawn, or ſtroll along the foreſt glade: but to this delightful retreat, ſhall

† Rom. viii. 22.

be my chief reſort. Thither will I make excurſions, but here will I dwell.

If from my low procedure I may form an alluſion to the moſt exalted practices, I would obſerve upon this occaſion, that the celebrated Eraſmus, and our judicious Locke, having trod the circle of the ſciences, and ranged through the whole extent of human literature, at length betook themſelves ſolely to the Bible. Leaving the ſages of antiquity, they ſat inceſſantly at the feet of Jesus. Wiſely they withdrew from that immenſe multiplicity of learning, from thoſe endleſs tracts of amuſing erudition, where noxious weeds are mixed with wholeſome herbs, where is generally a much larger growth of prickly ſhrubs than of fruitful boughs. They ſpent their moſt mature hours in thoſe hallowed gardens which God's own wiſdom planted, which God's own ſpirit watereth, and in which God's own Son is continually walking; where he meeteth thoſe that ſeek him, and revealeth to them the glories of his perſon, and the riches of his goodneſs.

Thus would I finiſh the remainder of my days! having had a taſte of the politer ſtudies, I would devote my future application to the lively oracles. From other purſuits one may glean ſome fragments of ſpacious inſtruction; from this I truſt to reap a harveſt of the ſublimeſt truths, the nobleſt improvements; and the pureſt joys.* Waft me then, O! waft my mind to Sion's conſecrated bowers. Let my thoughts perpetually rove through the awfully-pleaſing walks of inſpiration. Here grow thoſe heaven-born plants, the trees of Life and Knowledge, whoſe ambroſial fruits we now may "take and eat, and live for ever." Here flow thoſe precious ſtreams of grace and righteouſneſs;

* Quicquid docetur, veritas; quicquid præcipitur, bonitas; quicquid promittitur, felicitas.

neſs; whoſe living waters "whoſoever drinks, ſhall "thirſt no more." And what can the fables of Grecian ſong, or the fineſt pages of Roman eloquence —what can they exhibit, in any degree comparable to theſe matchleſs prerogatives of revelation?—— Therefore, though I ſhould not diſlike to pay a viſit now-and-then to my heathen maſters, I would live with the prophets and apoſtles. With the one I would carry on ſome occaſional correſpondence, but the others ſhould be my boſom friends, my inſeparable companions, "my delight and my counſellors."

WHAT ſweets are theſe that ſo agreeably ſalute my noſtrils?—they are the breath of the flowers, the incenſe of the garden.—How liberally does the jeſſamine diſpenſe her odoriferous riches! how deliciouſly has the woodbine embalmed this morning-walk? The air is all perfume.—And is not this another moſt engaging argument to forſake the bed of ſloth? who would lie diſſolved in ſenſeleſs ſlumbers, while ſo many breathing ſweets invite him to a feaſt of fragrancy? Eſpecially conſidering, that the advancing day will exhale the volatile dainties. A fugitive treat they are, prepared only for the wakeful and induſtrious: whereas, when the ſluggard lifts his heavy eyes, the flowers will droop, their fine ſcents be diſſipated; and, inſtead of this refreſhing humidity, the air will become a kind of liquid fire.

WITH this very motive, heightened by a repreſentation of the moſt charming pieces of morning ſcenery, the parent of mankind awakes his lovely conſort. There is ſuch a delicacy in the choice, and ſo much life in the deſcription, of theſe rural images, that I cannot excuſe myſelf without repeating the whole paſſage.—Whiſper it, ſome friendly genius, in the ear of every one that is now ſunk in ſleep, and loſt to all theſe noble gratification!

Awake: the morning ſhines, and the freſh field
Calls you: you loſe the prime, to mark how ſpring
The tended plants, how blows the citron grove;
What drops the myrrh, and what the balmy reed;
How nature paints her colours; how the bee
Sits on the bloom, extracting liquid ſweets. ‡

How delightful is this fragrance! It is diſtributed in the niceſt proportion; neither ſo ſtrong as to oppreſs the organs, nor ſo faint as to elude them.—We often ſit cloyed and ſated at a ſumptuous banquet; but this pleaſure never loſes its poignancy, never palls the appetite.—— Here luxury itſelf is innocent and refined; or, rather, in this caſe, indulgence is incapable of exceſs.—This balmy entertainment not only regales the ſenſe, but † chears the very ſoul; and, inſtead of clogging, elates its powers.—It puts me in mind of that ever-memorable ſacrifice, which was once made in behalf of offending mortals. I mean the ſacrifice of the bleſſed JESUS; when he offered up himſelf to GOD, "for a ſweet-ſmelling ſavour." For ſuch the holy ſpirit ſtiles that wonderful oblation: as if no image, in the whole ſenſible creation, was ſo proper to give us an idea of the ineffable ſatisfaction which the Father of mercies conceived from that unparalleled atonement, as the pleaſing ſenſations which ſuch rich perfumes are capable of raiſing. "Thouſands of rams, and ten thouſands of rivers "of oil," from an apoſtate world; the moſt ſubmiſſive acknowledgments, added to the moſt coſtly offerings, from men of defiled hands, and unclean lips; what could they have affected? A prophet introduces the "high and lofty One, that inha-
"biteth

‡ Milt. Par. loſt. B. V. l. 10.
† Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart.
Prov. xxvii.

"biteth eternity," turning Himſelf away from ſuch filthy rags; turning himſelf away with a diſdainful abhorrence, § as from the noiſome ſteams of a dunghil.—But in CHIRST's immaculate holineſs; in CHRIST's conſummate obedience; in CHRIST's moſt precious blood-ſhedding; O! with what unimaginable complacency does juſtice reſt ſatisfied, and vengeance acquieſce!——All thy works, O thou ſurety for ruined ſinners! all thy ſufferings, O thou ſlaughtered Lamb of GOD! as well as all thy garments, O thou Bridegroom of thy church! * ſmell of myrrh, aloes, and caſſia! They are infinitely more grateful to the eternal Godhead, than the choiceſt exhalations of the garden, than all the odours of the ſpicy eaſt, can be to the human noſtrils.

As the altar of old ſanctified the gift, ſo this is the great propitiation which recommends the obnoxious perſons and unprofitable ſervices of the believing world. In this may my ſoul be intereſted! By this may it be reconciled to the Father! There is ſuch a leprous depravity cleaving to my nature, as pollutes whatever I perform. My moſt profound adorations, and ſincereſt acts of religion, muſt not preſume to challenge a reward, but humbly implore forgiveneſs; † renouncing, therefore, myſelf in every inſtance of duty; diſclaiming all ſhadow

§ Amos v. 21, 22. * Pſal. xiv. 9.

† A writer of diſtinguiſhed ſuperiority thus addreſſes the great Obſerver of actions, and Searcher of hearts; and vindicates my ſentiments, while he ſo juſtly and beautifully utters his own;

Look down, great GOD, with pity's ſofteſt eye,
On a poor breathing particle in duſt:
His crimes forgive, forgive his virtues too,
Thoſe ſmaller faults, half converts to the right.
Night Thoughts, No. IX.

ſhadow of confidence * in any deeds of my own; may I now and evermore be accepted through the beloved!

WHAT colours, what charming colours, are here! Theſe, ſo nobly bold; and thoſe, ſo delicately languid. What a glow is enkindled in ſome! What a gloſs ſhines upon others! In one, methinks, I ſee the ruby, with her bleeding radiance; in another the ſapphire, with her ſky-tinctured blue; in all ſuch an exquiſite richneſs of dyes, as no other ſet of paintings in the univerſe can boaſt. § — With what a maſterly ſkill is every one of the varying tints diſpoſed! Here, they ſeem to be thrown on with an eaſy daſh of ſecurity and freedom; there they are adjuſted by the niceſt touches of art and accuracy. Thoſe which form the ground are always

* See page 44 and 45, in the ſecond edition of a moſt candid and evangelical little treatiſe, called CHRISTIANITY the great ORNAMENT of human life; printed for J. and J. Bonwicke, in St. Paul's church-yard.——" If chriſtians happily avoid " the dangerous extreme, and too often fatal rock, of " a dead fruitleſs faith on the one hand, he [i. e. Sa- " tan] will endeavour, by all kind of plauſible inſinu- " ations, to ſplit them on the oppoſite, viz. ſpiritual " pride, oſtentation, and dependance on their works, as " if THESE were the meritorious, or procuring cauſe " of all true peace, hope, conſolation, and divine ac- " ceptance. Now this ſelf-dependance may be ranked " among the moſt dangerous of the infernal politics, be- " cauſe the fatal poiſon lies deep, and too often undiſ- " cerned."

§ ——— Who can paint
Like nature? Can imagination boaſt,
Amid his gay creation, hues like theſe?
And can he mix them with that matchleſs ſkill,
And lay them on ſo delicately fine,
And loſe them in each other, as appears
In ev'ry bud that blows?—— Thomſ. Spring.

ways ſo judiciouſly choſen, as to heighten the luſtre of the ſuperadded figures; while the verdure of the impalement, or the ſhadings of the foliage, impart new livelineſs to the whole. Indeed; whether they are blended, or arranged; ſoftened, or contraſted; they are manifeſtly under the conduct of a taſte, that never miſtakes; a felicity, that never falls ſhort of; the very perfection of elegance.——How inimitably fine, is the texture of the web; on which theſe ſhining treaſures are diſplayed! What are the labours of the Perſian looms, or the boaſted commodities of Bruſſels, compared with theſe curious manufactures of nature? Compared with theſe, the moſt admired chintſes would loſe their reputation; even ſuperfine cambricks, appear coarſe as canvas in their preſence.

WHAT a chearing argument, does our Saviour derive from hence, to ſtrengthen our affiance in GOD! He directs us to learn a leſſon of heaven-depending faith, from every bird, that wings the air; and from every flower, that bloſſoms in the field. If providence, with unremitted care, ſupports thoſe inferior creatures; and arrays theſe inſenſible beings, with ſo much ſplendor; ſurely, he will in no wiſe withhold from his elect children, "bread to eat, "and raiment to put on."—O ye faithful followers of the Lamb, diſmiſs every low anxiety, relating to the needful ſuſtenance of life. He that feeds the ravens, from an inexhauſtible magazine; he that paints the plants, with ſuch ſurpaſſing elegance; in ſhort, he that provides ſo liberally, both for the animal and vegetable parts of his creation; will not, cannot, neglect his own people. Fear not, little flock, ye peculiar objects of almighty love! it is your father's good pleaſure, to give you a kingdom* And, if he freely gives you, an everlaſting kingdom hereafter;

* Luke xii. 32.

hereafter; he will certainly allow you, all neceſſary conveniences here.

One cannot forbear reflecting, in this place, on the too prevailing humour, of being fond and oſtentatious of dreſs *; what an abject and miſtaken ambition

* Mr. Addiſon has a fine remark on a female warrior celebrated by Virgil. He obſerves, that with all her other great qualities, this little foible mingled itſelf. Becauſe, as the poet relates, an intemperate fondneſs, for a rich and ſplendid ſuit of armour, betrayed her into ruin. In this circumſtance, our critic diſcovers a moral concealed; this he admires, as a neat, though oblique ſatire, on the trifling paſſion. Spect. Vol. 1. No. 15.

I would refer it to the judicious reader, whether there is not a beauty of the ſame kind, but touched with a more maſterly hand, in the ſong of Deborah. ——Speaking of Siſera's mother, the ſacred euchariſtic ode repreſents her, as anticipating, in her fond fancy, the victory of her ſon; and indulging the following ſoliloquy,—'Have they not ſped? Have they not divided the prey? To Siſera a prey of divers colours; a prey of divers colours of needle-work, of divers colours of needle-work on both ſides; meet for the necks of them that take the ſpoil?'—She takes no notice of the ſignal ſervice he would do his country, by quelling ſo dangerous an inſurrection: never once reflects on the preſent acclamations, the future advancements, and the eternal praiſe, which are the uſual acknowledgments of an illuſtrious conqueror's merit. She can conceive nothing greater, than to be clad in an embroidered veſture; and to trail along the ground, a robe of the richeſt dyes. This is, in her imagination, the moſt noble ſpoil, he can win; the moſt diſtinguiſhed trophy, he can erect——It is alſo obſervable, how ſhe dwells upon the trivial circumſtance; reiterating it again and again. It has ſo charmed her ignoble heart; ſo entirely engroſſed her little views; that ſhe can think of nothing elſe; ſpeak of nothing elſe; and can hardly ever deſiſt from the darling topic.—Is not this a keen, tho'

ambition is this! How unworthy the dignity of immortal, and the wiſdom of rational beings! eſpecially, ſince theſe little productions of the earth have indiſputably the pre-eminence, in ſuch outward embelliſhments. ——Go; cloath thyſelf with purple, and fine linen; trick thyſelf up in all the gay attire, that the ſhuttle or the needle can furniſh: yet know, to the mortification of thy vanity, that the native elegance of a common daiſy*, eclipſes all this elaborate finery—Nay, wert thou decked like ſome illuſtrious princeſs, on her coronation day, in all the ſplendor of royal apparel; couldſt thou equal even Solomon, in the height of his magnificence and glory; yet, would the meaneſt among the flowery populace outſhine thee: every diſcerning eye, would give the preference, to theſe beauties of the † ground.———Scorn then to borrow thy recommendations, from a neat diſpoſition of threads, and a curious arrangement of colours. Aſſume a becoming greatneſs of temper: let

tho' delicately couched, cenſure, on that poor contemptible, groveling taſte; which is enamoured with ſilken finery, and makes the attributes of a butterfly the idol of its affections?

How peculiarly conſpicuous, is the elevated and magnificent ſpirit of that venerable mother in Iſrael; when viewed in compariſon with the low, the idle turn of this Canaanitiſh lady!———Such ſtrong and beautiful contraſts are, I think, ſome of the moſt ſtriking excellencies of poetic painting: And in no book are they more frequently uſed, or expreſſed with greater life, than in the ſacred volumes of inſpiration.

* Peaceful and lowly in their native ſoil,
They neither know to ſpin, nor care to toil;
Yet with confeſs'd magnificence deride
Our mean attire, and impotence of pride. Prior.

† Mr. Cowley, with his uſual brilliancy of imagination, ſtiles them ſtars of the earth.

let thy endowments be of the immortal kind: ſtudy to be all-glorious within: be cloathed with humility: wear the ornament of a meek and quiet ſpirit.* To ſay all in a word, put on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt†: let his blood be ſprinkled upon thy conſcience, and it ſhall be whiter than the virgin ſnows: Let his righteouſneſs, like a ſpotleſs robe, adorn thy inner man; and thou ſhalt be amiable, even in the moſt diſtinguiſhing eye of God. Let his bleſſed ſpirit dwell in thy heart; and, under his ſanctifying operations, thou ſhalt be made partaker of a divine nature.

THESE are real excellencies; truly noble accompliſhments theſe. In this manner be arrayed, be beautified: and thou wilt not find a rival, in the feathers of a peacock, or the foliation of a tulip. Theſe will exalt thee, far above the low pretenſions of lace and embroidery. Theſe will prepare thee to ſtand in the beatific preſence, and to take thy ſeat among the angels of light.

WHAT an enchanting ſituation is this! One can ſcarce be melancholy, within the atmoſphere of flowers: ſuch lively hues, and delicious odours, not only addreſs themſelves agreeably to the ſenſes; but touch, with a ſurpriſing delicacy, the ſweeteſt movements of the mind:

——To

* How beautifully does the prophet deſcribe the furniture, of a renewed and heavenly mind; under the ſimilitude of a rich and complete ſuit of apparel! 'I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my ſoul ſhall be joyful in my God; for he hath cloathed me with the garments of ſalvation; he hath covered me with the robe of righteouſneſs, as a bridegroom decketh himſelf with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herſelf with her jewels.' Iſai. lxi. 10.

† Rom. xiii. 14.

——To the heart inſpiring
Vernal * delight and joy. MILT. B. IV.

How often have I felt them diſſipate the gloom of thought, and transfuſe a ſudden gaiety thro' the dejected ſpirit! I cannot wonder, that Kings deſcend from their thrones, to walk amidſt blooming ivory and gold; or retire from the moſt ſumptuous feaſt, to be recreated with the more refined ſweets of the garden: I cannot wonder, that queens forego, for a while, the compliments of a nation, to receive the tribute of the parterre; or withdraw from all the glitter of a court, to be attended with the much more ſplendid equipage of a bed of flowers.—But, if this be ſo pleaſing; what tranſporting pleaſure muſt ariſe, from the fruition of uncreated excellency! O, what unknown delight, to enter into thy immediate preſence, moſt bleſſed LORD GOD! to ſee thee†, thou King of heaven, and LORD of glory.

* "I would have my reader endeavour to MORALIZE this natural pleaſure of the ſoul, and to improve this vernal delight, as Milton calls it, into chriſtian virtue. When we find ourſelves inſpired with this pleaſing inſtinct, this ſecret ſatisfaction and complacency, ariſing from the beauties of the creation, let us conſider, to whom we ſtand indebted for all theſe entertainments of ſenſe; and who it is, that thus opens his hand, and fills the world with good.—— Such an habitual diſpoſition of mind conſecrates every field and wood; turns an ordinary walk into a morning and evening ſacrifice; and will improve thoſe tranſient gleams, which naturally brighten up and refreſh the ſoul on ſuch occaſions, into an inviolable and perpetual ſtate of bliſs and happineſs."
Spect. Vol. V. No. 394.

† Iſaiah repreſents the felicity of the righteous in the everlaſting world, by this elegant and amiable image. Thine eye ſhall ſee the king in his beauty.———Milton

glory, no longer "through a glaſs darkly, but face to face!" To have all thy goodneſs, all thy greatneſs, ſhine before us; and be made glad for ever with the brighteſt diſcovery of thy perfections, with the ineffable joy of thy countenance.

THIS we cannot bear, in our preſent imperfect ſtate. The effulgence of unveiled divinity, would dazzle a mortal ſight. Our feeble faculties, would be overwhelmed with ſuch a fulneſs of ſuper-abundant bliſs; and muſt lie oppreſſed, under ſuch "an "exceeding great, eternal weight of glory." But, "when this corruptible hath put on incorruption," the powers of the ſoul will be all invigorated; and theſe earthly Tabernacles "transformed into a like-"neſs with CHRIST's glorious body." Then, though * "the moon ſhall be confounded, and the "ſun aſhamed," when the LORD of hoſts is revealed from heaven; yet, ſhall his faithful people be enabled to ſee Him as he is †.

HERE then, my wiſhes, here be fixed: be this your determined and invariable aim: here, give a looſe to your whole ardour: cry out, all that is within me, in the language of inſpiration, this one thing have I deſired of the LORD, which, with inceſſant earneſtneſs, I will require; that I may dwell in the celeſtial houſe of the LORD, all the days of my future life; to behold the fair beauty of

ton touches the ſame ſubject, with ſurpriſing elevation and majeſty of thought: They

———walk with GOD,
High in ſalvation, and the climes of bliſs:

Words, which, like the fiery car, almoſt tranſport our affections to thoſe glorious manſions.

Iſai. xxxiii. 17. Milt. B. XI. v. 707.

* Iſai. xxiv. 23. † 1 John iii. 2.

of the Lord*, and to contemplate, with wonder and adoration—with unſpeakable and everlaſting rapture—all the attributes of the incomprehenſible Godhead.

SOLOMON, a moſt penetrating judge of human nature, knowing how much mankind is charmed, with the fine qualities of flowers; has figured out the bleſſed JESUS, that "faireſt a-"mong ten thouſand," by theſe lovely repreſentatives. He ſtiles Him † the Roſe of Sharon, and the Lily of the vallies ‡; like the one, full of delights, and communicable graces; like the other, exalted in majeſty, and complete in beauty. In that ſacred paſtoral, he ranges the creation; borrows its moſt finiſhed forms; and dips his pencil in its choiceſt dyes, to preſent us with a ſketch of the amiableneſs of his perſon: HIS amiableneſs, who is the light of the world; the glory of his church; the only hope, the ſovereign conſolation, of ſinners; and high, infinitely high, not only above the nobleſt compariſon, but even "above all bleſſing and praiſe."—May I alſo make the ſame heavenly uſe,

* Pſal. xxvii. 4. † Cant. ii. 1.
Malus ut arboribus decori eſt, ut vitibus uvæ,
Utque roſæ campis, ut lilia vallibus alba,
Sic Chriſtus decus omne ſuis.———

‡ By the lily of the vallies, I apprehend, is meant, not the flower which commonly paſſes under that denomination, and is comparatively mean; but the grand, majeſtic, garden-lily; growing in a rich irriguous ſoil, where it flouriſhes in the moſt ample manner, and arrives at the higheſt perfection. The circumſtance of the vallies, added by the ſacred writer, is ſignificant not of the ſpecies, but of the place.———This is, by far the nobleſt interpretation, and moſt exactly ſuitable to the ſpiritual ſenſe; which intimates, that the bleſſed JESUS delights to dwell, by the communications of his ſpirit, in humble hearts———. חעמקים שושנה lilium vallibus gaudens.

uſe of all ſublunary enjoyments! whatever is pleaſurable, or charming, below; let it raiſe my deſire to thoſe ſublime delights, which are above: which will yield, not partial, but perfect felicity; not tranſient, but never-ending, ſatisfaction and joy.—Yes, my ſoul, let theſe beauties in miniature, always remind thee of that glorious perſon; in whom "dwells all the fulneſs of the Godhead bodily." Let theſe little emanations, teach thee to thirſt after the eternal fountain: O! may the creatures, be thy conſtant clue to the Creator! for this is a certain truth, worthy thy moſt frequent recollection, and attentive conſideration; that the whole compaſs of finite perfection, is only a faint ray*, ſhot from that immenſe ſource; is only a ſmall drop, derived from that inexhauſtible ocean; of all good.

WHAT a ſurprizing variety is obſervable, among the flowery tribes! how has the bountiful hand of providence diverſified theſe niceſt pieces of his workmanſhip! added the charms of an endleſs novelty, to all their other perfections!—becauſe, a conſtant uniformity would ſoon render the entertainment tireſome, or, inſipid; therefore every ſpecies exhibits ſomething entirely new. The faſhion ſpreads not from family to family; but every one has a mode of its own, which is truly original. The moſt curſory glance, perceives an apparent difference, as well as a peculiar delicacy, in the airs and habits; the attitude and lineaments; of every diſtinct claſs.

SOME rear their heads, with a majeſtic mien; and over-look, like ſovereigns or nobles, the whole parterre.

* ———Thou ſitt'ſt above all heav'ns,
To us inviſible, or dimly ſeen
In theſe thy loweſt works; yet theſe declare
Thy goodneſs beyond thought, and pow'r divine.
Milton, Book V.

parterre. Others ſeem more moderate in their aims, and advance only to the middle ſtations; a genius turned for heraldry, would term them, the gentry of the border. While others, free from all aſpiring views, creep unambitiouſly on the ground, and look like the commonalty of the kind.—Some are interſected with elegant ſtripes, or ſtudded with radiant ſpots. Some affect to be genteelly powdered, or neatly fringed; while others are plain in their aſpect, unaffected in their dreſs, and content to pleaſe with a naked ſimplicity. Some aſſume the monarch's purple; ſome look moſt becoming in the virgin's white; but black, doleful black, has no admittance into the wardrobe of ſpring. The weeds of mourning would be a manifeſt indecorum, when nature holds an univerſal feſtival. She would, now, inſpire none but delightful ideas; and therefore always makes her appearance, in ſome * amiable ſuit.—— Here, ſtands a warrior, clad with crimſon; there, ſits a magiſtrate, robed in ſcarlet; and yonder, ſtruts a pretty fellow, that ſeems to have dipped his plumes in the rainbow, and glitters in all the gay colours of that reſplendent arch. Some riſe into a curious cup, or fall into a ſet of beautiful bells: ſome ſpread themſelves in a ſwelling tuft, or croud into a delicious cluſter.—In ſome, the predominant ſtain, ſoftens by the gentleſt diminutions; till it has even ſtole away from itſelf. The eye is amuſeed at the agreeable deluſion; and we wonder, to find ourſelves inſenſibly decoyed, into a quite different luſtre. In others, you would think, the fine tinges were emulous of pre-eminence; diſdaining to mingle, they confront one another, with the reſolution of rivals, determined to diſpute the prize of beauty; while each is improved, by the oppoſition, into the higheſt vivacity of complexion.

How

* ——Nunc formoſiſſimus annus. Virg.

How manifold are thy works, * O LORD! multiplied even to a prodigy. Yet in wiſdom, conſummate wiſdom, haſt thou made them all.——How I admire the vaſtneſs of the contrivance, and the exactneſs of the execution? Poor man, with difficulty, accompliſhes a ſingle work: hardly, and after many efforts, does he arrive at a tolerable imitation, of ſome one production of nature. But, the Almighty Artiſt ſpoke millions of ſubſtances, into inſtantaneous being, all wonderfully various, all completely perfect.——Repeated experiments generally diſcover errors, in our happieſt inventions. But, theſe fine ſtructures have pleaſed, for almoſt ſix thouſand years; and no † fault been diſcovered in the original plan, no room for the leaſt improvement upon the firſt model. All our performances, the more minutely they are ſcanned, the more imperfect they appear. But, with regard to theſe delicate objects, the more we ſearch into their properties, the more we are raviſhed with their graces: they are ſure to diſcloſe freſh ſtrokes, of the moſt maſterly ſkill; in proportion to the attention, with which they are examined.

NOR is the ſimplicity of the operation leſs aſtoniſhing, than the accuracy of the workmanſhip, or the infinitude of the effects. Should you aſk, "where, and what are the materials, that beautify the blooming world? What rich tints; what ſplendid dyes; what ſtores of ſhining crayons; ſtand by the Heavenly Limner, when he paints the robe of nature?" 'Tis anſwered, His powerful pencil needs no ſuch coſtly apparatus. A ſingle principle, under His conducting hand, branches out into an immenſity of the moſt varied, and moſt

* Pſalm civ. 24.

† Eccleſ. iii. 14. I know, that whatſoever GOD doth, it ſhall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it.

moſt finiſhed forms. The moiſture of the earth, and circumambient air, paſſed through proper ſtrainers, and diſpoſed in a range of pellucid tubes: this performs all the wonders, and produces all the beauties of vegetation. This creeps along the fibres, the low-ſpread moſs; and climbs to the very tops, of the lofty-waving cedars. This, attracted by the root, circulating through inviſible canals, and pervading the ſubſtance of the minuteſt twigs, burſts into gems; expands itſelf into leaves; and clothes the foreſt, with all its verdant honours.—This one *, plain and ſimple, cauſe gives birth to all the charms, which deck the youth, the maturity of the year. This bluſhes, in the early hepatica; and flames, in the late advancing poppy. This reddens into blood, in the veins of the mulberry; and attenuates itſelf into leafen gold, to create a covering for the quince. This breathes, in all the fragrant gales of our garden; and weeps odorous gum, in the groves of Arabia.—— So † wonderful is our Creator in counſel, and ſo excellent in working!

In a grove of tulips, or a knot of pinks, one perceives a difference in almoſt every individual. Scarce any two, are turned, and tinctured, exactly alike: each allows himſelf a little particularity in his dreſs, though all belong to one family: ſo that they are various, and yet the ſame———A pretty emblem this, of the ſmaller differences between proteſtant chriſtians. There are modes in religion, which admit of variation, without prejudice to ſound

* "When every ſeveral effect has a particular ſepa-
" rate cauſe, this gives no pleaſure to the ſpectator, as
" not diſcovering contrivance. But that work is beheld
" with admiration and delight, as the reſult of deep
" counſel, which is complicated in its parts, and yet
" ſimple in its operations. Where a great variety of
" effects are ſeen to ariſe from one principle operating
" uniformly." Abernethy on the attributes.

† Iſai. xxviii. 29.

ſound faith, or real holineſs: juſt as the drapery, on theſe pictures of the ſpring, may be formed after a variety of patterns, without blemiſhing their beauty, or altering their nature.——Be it ſo then, that, in ſome points of inconſiderable conſequence, ſeveral of our brethren diſſent: yet, let us all live amicably and ſociably together; for we harmonize in principles, though we vary in punctilios. Let us join in converſation, and intermingle intereſts; diſcover no eſtrangements of behaviour, and cheriſh no alienation of affection: if any ſtrife ſubſiſts, let it be to follow our Divine Maſter moſt cloſely, in humility of heart, and unblameableneſs of life: let it be to ſerve one another moſt readily, in all the kind offices of a cordial friendſhip. Thus ſhall we be united, though diſtinguiſhed; united in the ſame grand fundamentals, though diſtinguiſhed by ſome ſmall circumſtantials; united in one important bond of brotherly love, though diſtinguiſhed by ſome ſlighter peculiarities of ſentiment.

I APPREHEND, that between chriſtians, whoſe judgments diſagree only about a form of prayer, or manner of worſhip, there is no more eſſential difference; than between flowers that bloom from the ſame kind of ſeed, but happen to be ſomewhat diverſified in the mixtures of their colours:——Whereas, if one denies the divinity of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, and degrades the incarnate GOD to the meanneſs of a mere creature; if another cries up the worthineſs of human works, and depreciates the alone meritorious righteouſneſs of the glorious mediator; if a third addreſſes the incommunicable honours to a finite being, and bows to the image, or prays to the ſaint:——theſe are errors, in my opinion, unhappily derogatory to the Redeemer's dignity, and not a little prejudicial to the comfort of his people: againſt theſe, therefore, to remonſtrate, beſpeaks not the cenſorious bigot,

bigot, but the friend of truth, and the lover of mankind.——Whereas, to ſtand neuter and ſilent, while ſuch principles are propagated, might be an inſtance of criminal remiſſneſs, rather than of chriſtian moderation.——For perſons who eſpouſe ſuch perſuaſions, as the former; and habituate themſelves to ſuch practices, as the latter; we will not fail to maintain a tender compaſſion; we will not ceaſe to put up earneſt interceſſions: we will alſo acknowledge and love, whatever is truly excellent and amiable in them. Yet, we dare not ſubſcribe their creed; we cannot remit our aſſiduous, but kind endeavours, to reconcile them to what (on the moſt impartial examination) we are thoroughly convinced, is a more ſcriptural belief, and a purer worſhip ‡.

ANOTHER remarkable circumſtance, recommending the flowery creation, is their regular ſucceſſion. They make not their appearance all at once, but in an orderly rotation. While a proper number of theſe obliging retainers are in waiting, the others abſcond; but hold themſelves in a poſture of ſervice, ready to take their turn, and fill each his reſpective ſtation, the inſtant it becomes vacant.——The Snow-drop, foremoſt of the lovely train, breaks her way through the frozen ſoil, in

‡ In ſome former editions, I expreſſed myſelf, on this point, unwarily and harſhly. But my meaning, and real ſentiments were no other than thoſe repreſented above.—The reader, from ſuch unguarded intimations, might too naturally be led to conclude, that the author avows, and would ſtir up, a ſpirit of perſecution. But, this is a method of dealing with opponents in religious doctrines, which he diſclaims, as abſurd; and abhors, as iniquitous. He is for no force, but that of rational conviction; for no conſtraint, but that of affectionate perſuaſion. Thus, if you pleaſe, compel them to come in. Luke xiv. 23.

order to preſent her early compliments to her lord: dreſſed in the robe of innocency, ſhe ſteps forth, fearleſs of dangers; long before the trees have ventured to unfold their leaves, even while the icicles hang on our houſes.—Next peeps out the Crocus; but cautiouſly, and with an air of timidity: ſhe hears the howling blaſts, and ſkulks cloſe to her low ſituation. Afraid ſhe ſeems, to make large excurſions from her root; while ſo many ruffian winds are abroad, and ſcouring along the Æther.—Nor is the Violet laſt, in the ſhining embaſſy of the year; which, with all the accompliſhments that would grace a royal garden, condeſcends to line our hedges, and grow at the feet of briars. Freely, and without any ſolicitation, it diſtributes the bounty of its emiſſive ſweets: while itſelf, with an exemplary humility, retires from ſight; ſeeking rather to adminiſter pleaſure, than to win admiration.* Emblem, expreſſive emblem, of thoſe modeſt virtues, which delight to bloom in obſcurity; and extend a chearing influence to multitudes, who are ſcarce acquainted with the ſource of their comforts! Motive, engaging motive, to that ever-active beneficence; which ſtays not for the importunity of the diſtreſſed, but even prevents them with the bleſſings of its goodneſs!—The poor Polyanthus, that lately adorned the border with her ſparkling beauties; and, tranſplanted into our windows, gave us a freſh entertainment, is now no more. I ſaw her complexion fade; I perceived her Breath decay; till at length ſhe expired, and dropt into her grave.——Scarce have we ſuſtained this loſs, but in comes the Auricula, and more than retrieves it: arrayed ſhe comes, in a ſplendid variety of amiable forms; with an eye of cryſtal, and garments of the moſt gloſſy ſattin; exhaling perfume, and powdered

* Prodeſſe quàm conſpici.

dered with ſilver. A very diſtinguiſhed proceſſion this! The favourite care of the floriſt! Scarce one among them, but is dignified with a character of renown; or has the honour to repreſent, ſome celebrated toaſt. But theſe alſo, notwithſtanding their illuſtrious titles, have exhauſted their whole ſtock of fragrance, and are mingled with the meaneſt duſt———Who could forbear grieving at their departure, did not the Tulips begin to raiſe themſelves on their fine wands, or ſtately ſtalks? They fluſh the parterre with one of the gayeſt dreſſes, that blooming nature wears. Did ever beau or belle make ſo gaudy an appearance, in a birth-night ſuit? Here, one may behold the innocent wantonneſs of beauty: here ſhe indulges a thouſand freaks, and ſports herſelf in the moſt charming diverſity of colours: yet, I ſhould wrong her, were I to call her a coquet; becauſe, ſhe plays her lovely changes, not to enkindle diſſolute affections, but to diſplay her Creator's glory.—Soon ariſes the Anemone; incircled at the bottom, with a ſpreading robe; and rounded at the top, into a beautiful dome. In its looſely flowing mantle, you may obſerve a noble negligence; in its gently bending tufts, the niceſt ſymmetry. I would term it, the fine gentleman of the garden; becauſe it ſeems to have the peculiar felicity, of reconciling art with eaſe.——The ſame month has the merit of producing the Ranunculus. All bold and graceful, it expands the riches of its foliage; and acquires, by degrees, the loveliеſt enamel in the world. As perſons of intrinſic worth, diſdain the ſuperficial arts of recommendation, practiſed by fops; ſo, this lordly flower ſcorns to borrow any of its excellence, from powders and eſſences. It needs no ſuch attractives, to render it the darling of the curious; being ſufficiently engaging from the elegance of its figure, the radiant variety of its tin-

ges, and a certain ſuperior dignity of aſpect.—Methinks nature improves in her operations: her lateſt ſtrokes are moſt maſterly: to crown the collection, ſhe introduces the Carnation; which captivates every eye, with a noble ſpread of graces; and charms another ſenſe, with a profuſion of exquiſite odours. This ſingle flower has, centered in itſelf, the perfections of all the preceding: the moment it appears, it ſo commands our attention, that we ſcarce regret the abſence of the reſt.—The Gilly-flower, like a real friend, attends you through all the viciſſitudes and alterations of the ſeaſon: while others make a tranſient viſit only. This is rather an inhabitant, than a gueſt, in your gardens; adds fidelity to complaiſance.

BUT 'tis in vain to attempt a catalogue of theſe amiable gifts: there is an endleſs multiplicity, in their characters; and an invariable order, in their approaches. Every month brings its ornaments; ſuch as are different from the reſt, and peculiar to itſelf.

HERE, let me ſtand a while, to contemplate the wiſe and gracious deſign, apparent in this diſtribution of flowers, through the ſeveral periods of the year.——Were they all to bloſſom together; there would be at once a promiſcuous throng, and at once a total privation: ſo that we ſhould ſcarce have opportunity, of adverting to the beauties of half; and muſt ſoon loſe the agreeable company, of them all. But now, ſince every ſpecies has a ſeparate poſt to occupy; and a diſtinct time for appearing; we can take a leiſurely and minute ſurvey, of each ſucceeding ſet. We can view and review their forms; taſte their ſweets; enter into a more intimate acquaintance, with their charming qualities; and receive all thoſe pleaſing ſervices, which they are commiſſioned to yield.—This remarkable piece of Oeconomy is productive of another very

valuable

valuable effect. It not only places, in the moſt advantageous light every particular community; but alſo is the moſt effectual proviſion, againſt the frailty of the whole nation: or, to ſpeak more truly, it renders them a ſort of † immortal corps, whoſe ſucceſſionary attendants never fail. For, though ſome are continually dropping; yet, by this expedient, others are as continually riſing, to beautify our borders, and keep up the entertainment uninterrmitted.

O! what goodneſs is this to provide ſuch a ſeries of gratifications for mankind! both to diverſify, and perpetuate, the fine collation: to take care, that our paths ſhould be in a manner, inceſſantly ſtrewed with flowers.——And what wiſdom, to bid every one of theſe inſenſible beings, know the preciſe juncture for their coming forth! inſomuch, that no actor on a ſtage, can be more exact in performing his part; can make a more regular entry, or a more punctual exit.

Who imboldens the Daffodil, to venture abroad in February; and to truſt her flowering gold, with inclement and treacherous ſkies? Who informs the various tribes of Fruit-bearing bloſſoms, that vernal ſuns, and a more genial warmth, are fitteſt for their delicate texture? who teaches the Clove to ſtay, till hotter beams are prepared, to infuſe a ſpicy richneſs into her odours; and tincture her complexion with the deepeſt crimſon?—who diſpoſes theſe beautiful troops, into ſuch orderly bodies; retarding ſome, and accelerating others? Who has inſtructed

† "Alluſion to the celebrated practice of the Perſian "kings; who maintain for their life-guard, a body "of troops, called Immortal; becauſe it perpetually "ſubſiſted: for as ſoon as any of theſe men died, ano-"ther was immediately put into his place."

Rollin's Ancient Hiſtory, Vol. II.

ſtructed them to file off, with ſuch perfect regularity; as ſoon as the duty of their reſpective ſtations is over? And, when one detachment retires, who gives the ſignal for another immediately to advance? Who, but that unerring Providence, which from the higheſt thrones of angels, to the very loweſt degrees of exiſtence, orders all things in "number, "weight, and meaſure!"

THESE, O my ſoul, are the regulations of that moſt adorable, moſt beneficent being, who in the fulneſs of time bowed the heavens; came down to dwell on earth; and united the frailty of thy mortal nature, to all the glories of his godhead. All the honour of this admirable eſtabliſhment belongs to that ever-bleſſed ranſomer of ſinners; who ſuſtained the vengeance which thou haſt deſerved, and was doomed to ſuffer; who fulfilled the obedience, which thou waſt obliged, but unable to perform; and, in his moſt ſacred immaculate humanity, humbled himſelf (O never enough to be admired loving-kindneſs!) humbled himſelf to death, even the death of the croſs.—He formed this vaſt machine, and adjuſted its nice dependancies. The pillars, that ſupport it; the embelliſhments that adorn it; and the laws that govern it; are the reſult of his unſearchable counſels. O! the heights of his majeſty, and the depths of his abaſement!

WHICH ſhall we admire moſt, his eſſential greatneſs, or his free grace? He created the exalted ſeraph, that ſings in glory; and every the minuteſt inſect, that fluters in the air, or crawls in duſt. He marks out a path, for all thoſe globes of light, which travel the circuit of the ſkies, and diſdains not to rear the Violet from its lowly bed, or to plait the Daiſy that dreſſes our plains. So grand are his operations; yet ſo condeſcending his regards! If Summer, like a ſparkling bride, is all glorious in her apparel;

apparel; what is this, but a feeble reflection of his uncreated effulgence? If Autumn, like a munificent hoſt, exhibits all things richly to enjoy; what is this, but a little taſte of his inexhauſtible liberality? If thunders roar, you hear the ſound of his trumpet: if lightnings glare, you ſee the launching of his glittering ſpear: If the "perpetual hills be ſcattered, and the everlaſting mountains bowed," you behold a diſplay———No, ſays the Prophet, you have rather * the hiding of his power. So immenſe

* Heb. iii. 4. Nothing can be more magnificently conceived, than the imagery of this whole chapter; and upon the foot of our interpretation, nothing was ever more delicately and nobly turned, than the ſentiment of this clauſe. Other ſenſes of the paſſage, I acknowledge, may be aſſigned with equal propriety. But none, I think, can be imagined ſo majeſtic and ſublime. As this original will fairly admit of it; as it carries no diſagreement with the context; and expreſſes a moſt important, as well as undoubted truth; I hope, I may be permitted to uſe it at leaſt by way of accommodation. Eſpecially, as it ſuggeſts one of the fineſt Mottoes imaginable; wherewith to inſcribe all the viſible productions, of the Creator's hand. When ſtruck with aſtoniſhment, we conſider their grandeur, beauty, and conſummate perfections; let us, in juſtice to their author, apply the exalted reflection of this ſacred ode: "In all theſe is the "hiding, rather than an adequate diſplay, of his matchleſs power: Tho' they challenge our praiſe, and ſurpaſs our comprehenſion; yet are they by no means "the utmoſt exertions, but rather ſome ſlighter eſſays, "of Omnipotent ſkill."—Milton, relating the overthrow of the fallen angels, reminds his reader of a noble circumſtance, much of this nature. Meſſiah, unaided and alone, had utterly routed an innumerable hoſt of apoſtate ſpirits. But, to create a juſter idea of this illuſtrious conqueror, the poet beautifully adds,

"Yet half his ſtrength he put not forth."

If we forget to make the ſame remark, when we contemplate

is his power; ſo uncontroulable and inconceivable; that all theſe mighty works are but a ſketch, in which more is concealed than diſcovered.

THUS, I think, we ſhould always view the viſible ſyſtem; with an evangelical teleſcope (if I may be allowed the expreſſion,) and with an evangelical microſcope: regarding Chriſt Jeſus as the great projecter and architect; that planned, and executed, the amazing ſcheme. Whatever is magnificent or valuable; tremendous or amiable; ſhould ever be aſcribed to the Redeemer. This is the Chriſtian's Natural Philoſophy: and with regard to this method, of conſidering the things that are ſeen; we have an inſpired apoſtle, for our preceptor and precedent. Speaking of Chriſt, he ſays, "Thou, Lord, in the beginning, haſt laid the "foundations of the earth; and the heavens are "the work of thy hands."———Did we carefully attend to this leading principle, in all our examinations of nature; it would, doubtleſs, be a moſt powerful means of enkindling our love, and * ſtrengthening

template GOD in his works; we muſt neceſſarily form very ſcanty conceptions of that SUPREME BEING, before whom all nations are as a "Drop of a bucket, and "are counted as the ſmall duſt of the balance."

* The Apoſtles, I obſerve, delight to uſe this method of diſplaying the Honours of the Redeemer, and eſtabliſhing the faith of his people.—The beloved diſciple, teaching that moſt precious doctrine, "of a Lamb "ſlain to take away the ſins of the world;" in order to evince the ſufficiency of CHRIST'S ſacrifice for this bleſſed purpoſe, affirms, that "all things were made by him: and without him was not any thing," no, not ſo much as one ſingle being, made, John i. 3.——— St. Paul preaching the ſame glad tidings to the Coloſſians, and expreſly maintaining, That we have redemption through his

ening our faith: for, when I look round upon millions of noble ſubſtances, and carry with me this tranſporting reflection, "The Maker of them all "died on a croſs for me;" how can I remain any longer indifferent? Muſt not the coldeſt heart begin to glow with gratitude?——When I ſurvey an immenſity of the fineſt productions imaginable; and remember, that the author of them all is "my "Righteouſneſs, my Redemption?" how can I chooſe but repoſe the moſt chearful confidence, in ſuch a Mediator.

LET me add one more remark, upon the admirable adjuſtment of every particular, relating to theſe fine colonies planted in the parterre.—With

his blood; ſeems to foreſee an objection of this kind: "to expiate tranſgreſſions againſt an infinite majeſty, "is a moſt prodigious act; it muſt coſt vaſtly more than "any common ſurety can pay, to redeem a ſinful world. "What reaſon have we to believe, that JESUS is equal "to this mighty undertaking?" All poſſible reaſon, replies the apoſtle, from the dignity of his perſon: For he is the image of the inviſible GOD; and from the greatneſs of his works, "for by him all things were made." Conſider the operations of his hands, and you cannot doubt the atoning efficacy of his death, Col. i. 15, 16. —The author of the Epiſtle to the Hebrews falls exactly into the ſame train of arguing; declaring, that CHRIST JESUS has purged our ſins, by the ſacrifice of himſelf: he proves his ample ability for this tremendous office from his eſſential excellence, becauſe he is the brightneſs of his father's glory; and from his admirable works, becauſe, "he made the worlds, and upholdeth all things by the word of his power," Heb. i. 2, 3.—Which thought, as it is ſo important in itſelf; of ſuch ſignal comfort to Chriſtians; and ſo particularly inſiſted on, by the inſpired writers; I hope I ſhall need no apology for an attempt to illuſtrate and enforce it, in a kind of evangelical Deſcant upon Creation, annexed to theſe reflections.

ſuch ſurpriſing correctneſs, is their ſtructure finiſhed; that any the leaſt conceivable alteration would very much impair their perfection. Should you ſee, for inſtance, the nice diſpoſition of the Tulip's attire fly abroad, diſorderly and irregular, like the flaunting Woodbine: ſhould the Jeſſamin rear her diminutive head, on thoſe grand columns which ſupport the Holly-hock; ſhould the erect and manly aſpect of the Piony hang down with a penſive air, like the flexible bells of the Hyacinth: ſhould that noble plainneſs, which diſtinguiſhes the Lily, be exchanged for the fringes, which edge the Pink; or the gaudy ſtains, which bedrop the Iris: ſhould thoſe tapering pillars, which ariſe in the middle of its vaſe, and, tipt with golden pendants, give ſuch a luſtre to the ſurrounding pannels of alabaſter—Should theſe ſink and diſappear, like the Chives which cover the heart of the Anemone:—In many of theſe caſes, would not the tranſpoſition be fantaſtical and awkward? In all, to the apparent prejudice of every individual?

AGAIN; with regard to the time of their appearing; this circumſtance is ſettled, by a remarkable foreſight and precaution. What would become of the ſailor; if, in very ſtormy weather, he ſhould raiſe a lofty maſt, and crowd it with all his canvas? Such would be the ill effect; if the moſt ſtately ſpecies of flowers ſhould preſume to come abroad in the bluſtering months. Therefore, thoſe only that ſhoot the ſhorteſt ſtems, and diſplay the ſmalleſt ſpread of leaves, or, (if you pleaſe) carry the leaſt ſail, are launched amidſt the blowing ſeaſons. ——How injudiciouſly would the perfumer act; if he ſhould unſeal his fineſt eſſences, and expoſe them to the northern winds, or wintry rains? Our blooming artiſts of the aromatic profeſſion, at leaſt the moſt delicate among them, ſeem perfectly aware of the conſequences of ſuch a procedure. Accordingly,

ingly, they poſtpone the opening of their odoriferous treaſures; till a ſerener air, and more * unclouded ſkies, grant a protection to their amiable traffic: till they are under no more apprehenſions, of having them diſſipated by the rude blaſts, or drowned in inceſſant ſhowers.

WHAT a ſtriking argument is here for reſignation; unfeigned reſignation, to all the diſpoſals of Providence! Too often are our diſſatisfied thoughts apt to find fault with divine diſpenſations: we tacitly arraign our Maker's conduct, or queſtion his

* Caſimire, in a very poetical manner, addreſſes himſelf to the dormant Roſe; and moſt prettily invites her to venture abroad, by the mention of theſe two circumſtances.

Siderum ſacros imitata vultus,
Quid lates dudum, Roſa? Delicatum
Effer e terris caput, O tepentis
Filia cæli.

Jam tibi nubes fugiunt aquoſæ,
Quos fugant albis Zephyri *quadrigis;*
Jam tibi mulcet Boream *jocantis*
Aura Favoni.

Child of the ſummer, charming Roſe,
No longer in confinement lie:
Ariſe to light, thy form diſcloſe;
Rival the ſpangles of the ſky.

The rains are gone, the ſtorms are o'er;
Winter retires to make thee way:
Come then, thou ſweetly-bluſhing flow'r;
Come, lovely ſtranger, come away.

The ſun is dreſs'd in beaming ſmiles,
To give thy beauties to the day;
Young Zephyrs wait, with gentleſt gales,
To fan thy boſom, as they play.

his kindneſs with regard to ourſelves: we fancy our lot, not ſo commodiouſly ſituate; or our condition, not ſo happily circumſtanced; as if we had been placed in ſome other ſtation of life.—But, let us behold this exquiſitely nice regulation of the minuteſt plants; and be aſhamed of our ripening folly. Could any fibre in their compoſition be altered; or one line in their features be tranſpoſed; without clouding ſome of their beauties? Could any fold in their veſtments be varied; or any link in their orderly ſucceſſion be broken down; without injuring ſome delicate property? And does not that all-ſeeing eye, which preſerves ſo exact a harmony, among theſe pretty toys; maintain as watchful a care, over his rational creatures?—Does he chooſe the propereſt ſeaſon, for the Cowſlip to ariſe, and drink the dews? And can he neglect the concerns, or misjudge the conveniencies, of his ſons, and daughters? He, who has ſo completely diſpoſed, whatever pertains to the vegetable œconomy; that the leaſt diminution, or addition, would certainly hurt the finiſhed ſcheme; does without all peradventure, preſide, with equal attention, over the intereſt of his own people.

Be ſtill, then, thou uneaſy mortal*, know that God is unerringly wiſe; and, be aſſured, that, amidſt

* *Permittas ipſis expendere numinibus, quid*
Conveniat nobis, rebuſque ſit utile noſtris.
Nam pro jocundis aptiſſima *quæque dabunt Dii:*
Carior eſt illis homo, quam ſibi. Juven.

Since all the downward tracts of time
God's watchful eye ſurveys;
O! who ſo wiſe to chooſe our lot,
And regulate our ways?

Since none can doubt his equal love,
Unmeaſurably kind;
To his unerring, gracious will,
Be every wiſh reſigned.

Good

amidſt the greateſt multiplicity of Beings, he does not overlook thee. Thy Saviour has given me authority to aſſert, That thou art of far ſuperior value, in the eſtimate of omnipotence, than all the herbage of the field——If his ſacred will ordains ſickneſs for thy portion; never dare to imagine, that uninterrupted health would be more advantageous. If he pleaſes to withhold or take away, children; never preſume to conclude, that thy happineſs is blaſted, becauſe thy hopes of an increaſing family are diſappointed. He, that marſhals all the ſtarry hoſt, and ſo accurately arranges every the meaneſt ſpecies of herbs; HE orders all the peculiarities, all the changes of thy ſtate, with a vigilance, that nothing can elude; with a goodneſs that endureth for ever.—Bow thy head, therefore, in humble acquieſcence: reſt ſatisfied, That *whatever is*, by the appointment of heaven *, *is right*, is beſt.

AMONG

Good when he gives, ſupremely good;
Nor leſs, when he denies;
Ev'n croſſes, from his ſov'reign hand,
Are bleſſings in diſguiſe.

* If Mr. Pope underſtands the maxim in this limited ſenſe, he ſpeaks a moſt undeniable and glorious truth. But, if that great poet includes whatever comes to paſs, through the wild and extravagant paſſions of men; ſurely no thinking perſon, at leaſt no Chriſtian, can accede to his opinion.—What GOD orders, is wiſe, beyond all poſſibility of correction; and good, above all that we can aſk or think. His decrees are the reſult of infinite diſcernment; and all his diſpenſations, the iſſues of unbounded benevolence.——But man, fallen man, is hurried away by his luſts, into a thouſand irregularities; which are deplorably evil in themſelves, and attended with conſequences, manifeſtly pernicious to ſociety.—Let the ſentiment, therefore, be reſtrained to the

AMONG all the productions of the third creating-day, this of flowers ſeems to be peculiarly deſigned for man: a preſent, calculated in an eſpecial manner, for his uſe and delight. Man has, as it were, the monopoly of this faſcour; and ſcarce ſhares the ſatisfaction, reſulting from it, with any other animal. I don't find, that other creatures are ſmit with their beauties, or regaled with their odours. The horſe never ſtands ſtill, to gaze upon their charms; nor does the ox turn aſide, to browze upon their ſweets. Senſes they have, to diſcern theſe curious objects in the groſs; but no taſte, to diſtinguiſh their fine accompliſhments.——Juſt ſo, carnal and unenlightened men may underſtand the literal meaning of ſcripture; may comprehend the evidence of its divine inſpiration; and yet have no reliſh of the heavenly truths, it teaches; no ardent longing for the ſpiritual bleſſings, it offers; ſee "no form of comelineſs" in the Saviour, it deſcribes, ſo as to render him the ſupreme deſire of their ſoul.

THE chief end of theſe beautiful appearances, philoſophers ſay, is to enfold and cheriſh the embryo ſeed; or to ſwathe the tender body, during its infant ſtate.——But, whatever is the chief end of nature; 'tis certain, ſhe never departs from the deſign,

the diſpoſal of heaven, and I moſt readily ſubſcribe it. But, if it be extended to the conduct of men, and the effects of their folly; I think myſelf obliged to enter my proteſt againſt it. For, whatever kindles the divine indignation is cauſe of final ruin to the author——is ſtrictly forbidden by GOD's holy word——is contrary to the whole deſign of his revealed will, and the very reverſe of his eſſential attributes——This cannot poſſible be right. This is moſt undoubtedly wrong. Omnipotence, indeed, can over-rule it, and enduce good from it: But, the very notion of over-ruling ſuppoſes it to be abſolutely wrong in itſelf.

deſign, of adminiſtering delight to mankind.* This is inſeparably connected with her other views. —Were it only to ſecure a reproductive principle, what need of ſuch elegant complications? Why ſo much art employed, and ſo many decorations added? Why ſhould veſtments be prepared, richer than brocades, more delicate than lawns, and of a finer glow than the moſt admired velvets?——If the great mother had no other aim than barely to accommodate her little offspring, warm flannel, or homely fuſtian, would have ſerved her turn; ſerved it full as well as the moſt ſumptuous tiſſues, or all the furniture of the mercer's ſhop.

It ſeems plain then, that flowers were endued with ſuch inchanting graces, for the pleaſure of man; and in purſuance of this original intention, they ſtill pay their court to the human race. Accordingly, the fineſt of each ſpecies croud about our habitation; and are rarely to be ſeen at a diſtance from our abodes. They thrive under our cultivating hand, and obſerving eye; but degenerate and pine away, if unregarded by their lord.—To win his attention and deck his retreats, they hide their deformities under ground, and diſplay nothing but the moſt graceful forms and engaging colours to his ſight. To merit a farther degree of his eſteem, the generality of them diſpenſe a delightful

* "We find that the moſt important parts in the "vegetable world are thoſe which are the moſt beauti-"ful. Theſe are the ſeeds by which the ſeveral races "of plants are propagated and continued, and which "are always lodged in flowers or bloſſoms. Nature "ſeems to hide her principal deſign, and to be induſ-"trious in making the earth gay and delightful, while "ſhe is carrying on her great work, and intent upon "her own preſervation."

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lightful perfume. And, what is ſtill more obliging, reſerve† their richeſt exhalations to embalm his morning and evening walks:§ becauſe he uſually chooſes thoſe cool hours to recreate himſelf among their blooming ranks; therefore, at thoſe hours, they are moſt laviſh of their fragrance, and breathe out their choiceſt ſpirits.

O MAN, greatly beloved by thy Creator! The darling of Providence! Thou art diſtinguiſhed by his goodneſs, diſtinguiſh thyſelf alſo by thy gratitude. Be it thy one undivided aim, to glorify him who has been at ſo much expence to gratify thee! —While all theſe inferior creatures in ſilent eloquence declare the glory of GOD, do thou lend them thy tongue. Be thou the high-prieſt of the mute creation: let their praiſes become vocal in thy ſongs.——Adore the ſupreme benefactor, for the bleſſings he ſhowers down upon every order of beings: adore him for numberleſs mercies, which are appropriated to thyſelf: but, above all, adore him for that noble gift of a rational and immortal ſoul.—This conſtitutes us maſters of the globe, and gives us the real enjoyment of its riches. This diſcovers ten thouſand beauties, which otherwiſe had been loſt, and renders them both a ſource of delights, and a nurſery of devotion.——By virtue of this exalted principle, we are qualified to admire our Maker's works, and capable

† ————The flow'rs,
That open now their choiceſt boſom'd ſmells,
Reſerv'd from night, and kept for thee in ſtore.
MILT.

§ The twining jaſmine, and the bluſhing roſe,
With laviſh grace the morning ſcents diſcloſe;
The ſmelling tub'roſe and jonquil declare
The ſtronger impulſe of an ev'ning air.
PRIOR's Sol.

capable of bearing his illuſtrious image: bearing his illuſtrious image, not only when theſe ornaments of the ground have reſigned their honours; but when the great origin of day is extinguiſhed in the ſkies, and all the flaming orbs on high are put out in obſcure darkneſs.——Then to ſurvive; to ſurvive the ruins of one world, and to enjoy GOD —to reſemble GOD—to be "filled with all the "fulneſs of GOD," in another—what a happineſs, what an ineſtimable happineſs is this! yet this is thy privilege (barter it not for trifles of an hour), this thy glorious prerogative, O man!

O! the goodneſs, the exuberant goodneſs of GOD! I cannot forbear celebrating it once more, before I paſs to another conſideration.——How much ſhould we think ourſelves obliged, to a generous friend, that ſhould build a ſtately edifice,* purely

* I cannot perſuade myſelf, that the compariſon is ſtretched beyond proper bounds, when carried to this pitch. It my ſtedfaſt opinion, that the world, at leaſt this lower world, with its various appurtenances, was intended purely for man; that it is appropriated to him, and that he (in ſubordination to God's glory) is the end of its creation.—Other animals, 'tis true, partake of the Creator's benefits; but then, they partake under the notion of man's domeſtics, or on the foot of retainers to him; as creatures that bear ſome relation to his ſervice, and ſome way or other contribute to his good. So that ſtill He is the centre of the whole; or as our incomparable Milton, equally maſter of poetry and divinity, expreſſes himſelf, "All things live for man." Par. Loſt, XI. 161.

Mr. Pope, in his Ethic Epiſtles, is pleaſed to explode this tenet, as the height of pride, and a groſs abſurdity. ——For my part, I ſee no reaſon for ſuch a charge. With all ſubmiſſion to ſo ſuperior a genius, it ſeems very remote from pride, to be duly ſenſible of favours vouchſafed; to contemplate them in all the extent of their munificence, and acknowledge them accordingly.

I ſhould

purely for our abode! But how greatly would the obligation be increaſed, if the hand that built ſhould

I ſhould rather imagine, that to contract their ſize, when they are immenſely large; to ſtint their number, when they are altogether innumerable; that ſuch a procedure ſavours more of inſenſibility, than our hypotheſis of preſumption; and has more in it of ingratitude, than that of arrogance.

And how can it be deemed an abſurdity, to maintain that GOD gave us a world for our poſſeſſion, when it is our duty to believe, that He gave us his only Son, for our propitiation? Sure it can be neither difficult nor extravagant to ſuppoſe, that He deſigned this habitable globe, with its whole furniture, for our preſent uſe; ſince He withheld not his Holy Child JESUS, but freely delivered him up for our final ſalvation.

Upon the whole, I cannot but conclude, that the attempt of our famous poet, is neither kind with regard to his fellow-creatures —— nor grateful with regard to his creator—— neither is his ſcheme, in fact, true. The attempt not kind with regard to man, becauſe it robs him of one of the moſt delightful and raviſhing contemplations imaginable. To conſider the great author of exiſtence as having me in his eye when He formed univerſal nature; as contriving all things with an immediate view to the exigencies of my particular ſtate; and making them all in ſuch a manner as might be moſt conducive to my particular advantage: this muſt needs occaſion the ſtrongeſt ſatisfactions, whenever I caſt a glance on the objects that ſurround me.—— Not grateful with regard to GOD; becauſe it has the moſt direct tendency to diminiſh our ſenſe of his kindneſs, and conſequently to throw a damp upon our gratitude. It teaches us to look upon ourſelves, as almoſt loſt among a croud of other beings, or regarded only with an occaſional and incidental beneficence; which muſt certainly weaken the diſpoſition, and indeed ſlacken the ties, to the moſt adoring thankfulneſs.—— To which, I apprehend, we may juſtly add, neither is the ſcheme, in fact, true. For, not to mention what might be urged from the ſure word of revelation, this one argument appears

ſhould alſo furniſh it: and not only furniſh with all that is commodious and comfortable, but ornament it alſo with whatever is ſplendid and delightful! This has our moſt indulgent Creator done; in a manner infinitely ſurpaſſing all we could wiſh or imagine.

THE Earth is aſſigned us for a dwelling.——The Skies are ſtretched over us like a magnificent canopy, dyed in the pureſt azure, and beautified, now with pictures of floating ſilver, now with colourings of reflected crimſon.——The Graſs is ſpread under us as a ſpacious carpet, wove with ſilken threads of green, and damaſked with flowers of every hue.—The Sun, like a golden lamp, is hung out in the ethereal vault, and pours his effulgence all the day, to lighten our paths.—When night approaches, the moon takes up the friendly office; and the Stars are

appears to be ſufficiently concluſive. The world began with man; the world muſt ceaſe with man; conſequently, the grand uſe, the principal end of the world, is to ſubſerve the intereſts of man. It is on all ſides agreed, that the edifice was erected when man was to be furniſhed with an habitation; and that it will be demoliſhed when man has no further need of its accommodations: when he enters into the houſe not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, "the earth, and all the "works that are therein, ſhall be burnt up." From which it ſeems a very obvious and fair deduction, that man is the final cauſe of this inferior creation.

So that I think my readers and myſelf privileged (not to ſay, on the principles of gratitude, obliged) to uſe thoſe lovely lines of our author, with a propriety and truth equal to their elegance and beauty.

For me kind nature wakes her genial pow'r,
Suckles each herb, and ſpreads out ev'ry flow'r;
Annual, for me, the grape, the roſe renew
The juice nectarous, and the balmy dew;
For me the mine a thouſand treaſures brings;
For me health guſhes from a thouſand ſprings.
Eth. Ep. I. ver. 129.

are kindled in twinkling myriads, to chear the darkneſs with their milder luſtre, not diſturb our repoſe by too intenſe a glare.—— The Clouds, beſides the rich paintings they hang around the heavens, act the part of a ſhifting ſcreen, and defend us, by their ſeaſonable interpoſition, from the ſcorching beams of ſummer: may we not alſo regard them as the great watering-pots of the globe; which, wafted on the wings of the winds, diſpenſe their moiſture ‡ evenly through the univerſal garden; and fructify with their ſhowers whatever our hand plants.—— The Fields are our exhauſtleſs granary.——The Ocean is our vaſt reſervoir. The Animals ſpend their ſtrength to diſpatch our buſineſs; reſign their cloathing to repleniſh our wardrobe;

‡ This circumſtance, amidſt abundance of other noble and delicate remarks upon the wonders of nature, is finely touched in the Philoſophical Tranſactions recorded in the book of Job, chap. xxxviii. ver. 25.—— מיפיג לכשט תעלח "Who hath divided a watercourſe for the overflowing of waters?"—The Hebrew is ſo pregnant and rich with ſenſe, that no tranſlation can do it juſtice. The following paraphraſe, perhaps, may repreſent the principal ideas comprehended in the expreſſive original:——Who has branched out, and with admirable judgment diſpoſed a variety of aqueducts, for that immenſe collection of waters which float in the ſky? Who diſtributes thoſe pendulous floods thro' all the borders of the earth? Diſtributes them, not in dreadful cataracts, or promiſcuous gluts of rain; but in kindly drops, and refreſhing ſhowers, with as much regularity and œconomy, as if they were conveyed by pipes from a conduit? To whom ſhall we aſcribe that niceneſs of contrivance, which now emits, now reſtrains them; ſometimes drives their humid train to one place, ſometimes to another; diſpenſes them to this ſoil in larger, to that in ſmaller communications; and, in a word, ſo manages the mighty fluid, that every ſpot is ſupplied in exact proportion to its wants, and none deſtroyed by an undiſtinguiſhing deluge?

robe; and ſurrender their very lives to provide for our tables.—In ſhort, every element is a ſtore-houſe of conveniencies; every ſeaſon brings us the choiceſt productions; all nature is our caterer.—And, what is a moſt endearing recommendation of theſe favours, they are all as lovely as they are uſeful. You obſerve nothing mean or inelegant. All is clad in beauty's faireſt robe,* and regulated by proportion's niceſt rule. The whole ſcene exhibits a fund of pleaſures to the imagination, at the ſame time that it more than ſupplies all our wants. §

THEREFORE thou art inexcuſable, O man, whoſoever thou art, that rebelleſt againſt thy Maker. He ſurrounds thee with unnumbered benefits; and follows thee with an effuſion of the richeſt, nobleſt gifts. He courts thy affections, he ſolicits thy gratitude, by liberalities which are never intermitted, by a bounty which knows no limits.—— O! moſt bleſſed Lord, let this thy goodneſs, thy unwearied goodneſs, lead us to repentance. Win us to thyſelf, thou fountain of felicity, by theſe ſweet inducements. Draw us to our duty, thou GOD of our ſalvation, by theſe "cords of love."

WHAT a living picture is here of the beneficial effects of induſtry! By induſtry and cultivation, this

* Perhaps it was from ſuch an obſervation, that the Greeks, thoſe critical and refined judges of things, expreſſed the mundane ſyſtem by a word which ſignifies beauty——κοσμος.

§ "Thoſe ſeveral living creatures, which are made "for our ſervice or ſuſtenance, at the ſame time either "fill the woods with their muſic, furniſh us with game, "or raiſe pleaſing ideas in us by the delightfulneſs of "their appearance. Fountains, lakes and rivers, are "as refreſhing to the imagination, as to the ſoil through "which they paſs."

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this neat ſpot is an image of Eden. Here is all that can entertain the eye, or * regale the ſmell: whereas, without cultivation, this ſweet garden had been a deſolate wilderneſs; vile thiſtles had made it loathſome, and tangling briars inacceſſible. Without cultivation, it might have been a neſt for ſerpents, and the horrid haunt of venomous creatures. But, the ſpade and pruning-knife, in the hand of induſtry, have improved it into a ſort of terreſtrial paradiſe.

How naturally does this lead our contemplation, to the advantages that flow from a virtuous education, and the miſeries that enſue from the † neglect of it!———The mind, without early inſtitution, muſt, in all probability, become like the "vine-"yard of the ſluggard." If left to the propenſities of its own depraved will, what can we expect but a moſt luxuriant growth of unruly appetites, which in time will break forth into all manner of ſcandalous irregularities? What?—but that Anger, like a prickly thorn, arm the temper with an untractable moroſeneſs: Peeviſhneſs, like a ſtinging nettle, render the converſation forbidding: Avarice, like ſome choaking weed, teach the fingers to gripe, and the hands to oppreſs: Revenge, like ſome poiſonous plant replete with baneful juices, rankle in the breaſt, and meditate miſchief to its neighbour: while unbridled Luſts, like ſwarms of noiſome inſects, taint each riſing thought, and render "every "imagination of the heart only evil continually." —Such are the uſual products of ſavage nature! Such the furniture of the uncultivated ſoul!

WHEREAS let the mind be put under the "nur-"ture and admonition of the LORD:" Let a holy diſcipline clear the ſoil: let ſacred inſtructions ſow it

* Omnis copia narium. HOR.
† Neglectis urenda filix innaſcitur agris. HOR.

it with the beſt ſeed: let ſkill and vigilance dreſs the riſing ſhoots; direct the young ideas how to ſpread, the wayward paſſions how to move.—Then what a different ſtate of the inner man will quickly take place? Charity will breathe her ſweets, and Hope expand her bloſſoms; the perſonal virtues diſplay their graces, and the ſocial ones their fruits: * the ſentiments become generous, the carriage endearing; the life honourable and uſeful. §

O! that governors of families, and maſters of ſchools, would watch, with a conſcientious ſolicitude, over the morals of their tender charge! What pity it is, that the advancing generation ſhould loſe theſe invaluable endowments, through any ſupineneſs in their inſtructors!——See! with what aſſiduity the curious floriſt attends his little nurſery; viſits them early and late, furniſhes them with the propereſt mould, ſupplies them with ſeaſonable

* This transformation of the heart, and renewal of the life, are repreſented in ſcripture, by ſimilitudes, very nearly allied to the images uſed above;—God, by his ſanctifying ſpirit, "will make the ſoul as a wa-"tered garden." Under the operation of this divine principle, "the deſart ſhall rejoice, and bloſſom as the "roſe." Wherever it exerts the refining and ennobling energy, "inſtead of the thorn ſhall come up the fir-tree; "and inſtead of the briar, the myrtle-tree." Jerem. xxxi. 12. Iſa. xxxv. 1. Iſai. iv. 13.

§ ——————A teneris aſſueſcere tanti eſt! Virg.

——————————ου γαρ μικρον διαφερει, το ουτως η ουτως ευθυς εκ νεων εθιζεσθαι, αλλα παμπολυ, μαλλον δε το παν. Ariſtot. The principles we imbibe, and the habits we contract, in our early years, are not matters of ſmall moment, but of the utmoſt conſequence imaginable. They not only give a tranſient, or ſuperficial tincture, to our firſt appearance in life; but moſt commonly, ſtamp the form of our whole future conduct, and even of our eternal ſtate.

ſonable moiſtures; guards them from the ravages of inſects; ſcreens them from the injuries of the weather; marks their ſpringing buds; obſerves them attentively through their whole progreſs; and never intermits his anxiety, till he beholds them blown into full perfection.—And ſhall a range of painted leaves, that flouriſh to-day, and to-morrow fall to the ground—ſhall theſe be tended with more zealous application, than the noble faculties of an immortal ſoul?

YET truſt not in cultivation alone; 'tis the bleſſing of the almighty huſbandman, that imparts ſucceſs to ſuch labours of love. If GOD "ſeal "up the bottles of heaven," and commands the clouds to withhold their fatneſs, the beſt manured plot becomes a barren deſart. And, if he reſtrain the dew of his heavenly benediction, all human endeavours miſcarry; the rational plantation languiſhes; and our moſt pregnant hopes, from youths of the moſt promiſing genius, prove abortive. "Their root will be as rottenneſs, and their bloſſom "will go up as duſt."*—Therefore, let parents plant; let tutors water; but let both look up to the father of ſpirits, for the deſired increaſe.

ON every ſide I ſpy ſeveral budding flowers As yet they are cloſely convolved, and wrapt within a ſtrong incloſure. All their beauties lie concealed, and their ſweets locked up.—Juſt ſuch is the niggardly wretch, whoſe aims are all turned inward, and meanly terminated upon himſelf; who makes his own private intereſts, or perſonal pleaſures, the ſole centre of his deſigns, and the ſcanty circumference of all his actions.

BUT, ere long, the ſearching beams will open theſe ſilken folds, and draw them into a graceful expanſion.

* Iſai. v. 24.

expanſion. Then, what a lovely bluſh will glow in their cheeks; and what a balmy odour exhale from their boſoms —— ſo, when divine grace ſhines upon the mind, even the churl becomes bountiful: the heart of ſtone is taken away; and a heart of fleſh, a heart ſuſceptible of the ſofteſt, moſt compaſſionate emotions, is introduced in its ſtead. O! how ſweetly do the ſocial affections dilate themſelves, under ſo benign an influence! Juſt like theſe diſcloſing gems, under the powerful eye of day. The tender regards are no longer confined to a ſingle object; but extend themſelves into a generous concern for mankind, and ſhed liberal refreſhments on all within their reach ‡.

ARISE then, thou Sun of Righteouſneſs; ariſe with healing under thy wings; and transfuſe thy gentle, but penetrating ray, thro' all our intellectual powers. Inlarge every narrow diſpoſition, and fill us with a diffuſive benevolence. Make room in our breaſts, for the whole human race; and teach us to love all our fellow-creatures, for their amiable Creator's ſake. May we be pleaſed with their excellencies, and rejoice at their happineſs;

‡ How beautiful is the idea, and how ſignificant the expreſſion, in that fine paſſage of the prophet; where deſcribing the charitable temper, he ſays—'If thou draw out thy ſoul to the hungry!'——which, I think, may very properly be illuſtrated by the circumſtances obſerved above. The opening of theſe buds into a large and extenſive ſpread, is a pretty portrait of the amplitude of a generous heart; which cannot ſhut up its compaſſion, or remain unconcerned at any human calamity. The freeneſs and copiouſneſs, with which their choiceſt eſſences, their aromatic ſouls, are continually poured out; may repreſent, not only the various acts of an unwearied liberality; but alſo that cordial affection, and yearning tenderneſs, with which they are beſtowed. Iſai. lviii. 10.

but feel their miſeries as our own, and, with a brother's ſympathy, haſten to relieve them!

DISPOSED at proper diſtances, I obſerved a range of ſtrong and ſtately ſtalks. They ſtand like towers along the walls of a fortified city; or riſe like lofty ſpires, amidſt a group of houſes. They part at the top, into ſeveral penſile ſpiky pods; from each of which will be excluded, within a little time, a fine figure, of a very peculiar and inſtructive character; rounded into a form, that conſtitutes a perfect circle; ſpread wide open, into the moſt frank and communicative air; tinged with the colour, which, of all others, moſt captivates the miſer's eye.

BUT, the property I chiefly admire, is its paſſionate fondneſs for the Sun. When evening with her ſhades comes on, the poor flower droops, and folds up its leaves. It mourns all the long night, like ſome forlorn lover, for the abſence of the light. No ſooner does Providence open "the eye-"lids of the morning;" but immediately it * addreſſes itſelf, to the object of its affection; courts and careſſes it all the day; nor ever loſes ſight of the refulgent charmer, ſo long as he continues above the horizon.—In the morning you may perceive it, preſenting a golden boſom to the eaſt; at noon, it points upward, to the middle ſky; in the evening, follows the ſame attractive influence to the weſt.

SURELY, Nature is a book, and every page rich with ſacred hints. To an attentive mind, the garden turns preacher; and its blooming tenants are ſo many lively ſermons. What an engaging pattern, and what an excellent leſſon, have we here! ———ſo, let the redeemed of the LORD look unto

* ———Illa ſuum, quamvis Radice tenetur,
Vertitur ad Solem.—— OVID.

unto JESUS *, and be conformed to their beloved. Let us all be Heliotropes (if I may uſe the expreſſion) to the Sun of Righteouſneſs. Let our paſſions riſe and fall; take this Courſe or that; as his word determines, as his holy example guides. Let us be ſo accommodated, both to his commanding and providential will, as the wax is turned to the imprinting ſeal; or as the aſpect of this enamoured flower, to the ſplendid ſtar which creates our day.

IN every Enjoyment, O thou watchful chriſtian, look unto JESUS; receive it as proceeding from his love, and purchaſed by his agonies †.——In every Tribulation look unto JESUS; mark his gracious hand, managing the ſcourge; or mingling the bitter cup; attempering it to a proper degree of Severity; adjuſting the time of its continuance; and ready to make theſe ſeeming diſaſters, productive of real good——In every Infirmity and Failing, look unto JESUS, thy merciful High-Prieſt; pleading his atoning blood, and making interceſſion for tranſgreſſors.——In every Prayer look unto JESUS thy prevailing advocate; recommending thy devotions, and "bearing the iniquity of thy holy "things ‡."——In every Temptation look unto JESUS, the author of thy ſtrength, and captain of thy ſalvation, who alone is able to lift up the hands that hang down, to invigorate the enfeebled knees, and make thee more than conqueror over all thy enemies.——But eſpecially, when the hour of thy departure approaches; when "thy fleſh and thy "heart fail; when all the ſprings of life are irreparably breaking; then look unto JESUS, with a

* Heb. xii. 2.

† He ſunk beneath our heavy woes,
To raiſe us to the throne:
'There's not a gift his hand beſtows,
'But coſt his heart a groan.' WATTS.

‡ Exod. xxviii. 38.

believing eye *. Like expiring Stephen, behold him ſtanding at the right hand of GOD, on purpoſe to ſuccour his people, in this their laſt extremity. Yes, my chriſtian friend, when the journey through life is finiſhed, and thou art arrived on the very verge of mortality; when thou art juſt launching out into the inviſible world, and all before thee is vaſt eternity; then, O then, be ſure to look ſtedfaſtly unto JESUS! "See by Faith the LORD's "CHRIST." View him, as the only Way †, to the everlaſting manſions; as the only Door, ¶ to the abodes of bliſs.

YONDER tree, that faces the ſouth, has ſomething too remarkable, to paſs without obſervation. ——Like the fruitful, tho' feeble vine, ſhe brings forth a large family of branches: but, unable to ſupport them herſelf, commits them to the tuition of a ſunny wall. As yet, the tender twigs have ſcarce gemmed their future bloſſoms. However, I may anticipate the well known productions; and picture to myſelf the Paſſion-flower; which will, in due time, with a long and copious ſucceſſion, adorn the boughs.

I HAVE read, in a profane author, of flowers inſcribed with the names of kings ‡: but here is one, imblazoned with the marks of the bleeding Prince of life. I read, in the inſpired writings of apoſtolic men; who bore about, in their bodies, the Dying of the LORD JESUS §: but, here is a *blooming*

* Look unto ME, and be ye ſaved, all the ends of the earth. Iſai. xlv. 22.

† John xiv. 6. ¶ John x. 9.

‡ Dic, quibus in Terris inſcripti Nomina Regum
Naſcantur Flores?——. VIRG.

§ 2 Cor. iv. 10.

blooming religioſo, that carries apparent memorials, of the ſame tremendous and fatal cataſtrophe.——Who would have expected to find ſuch a tragedy of woe, exhibited in a collection of the moſt delicate delights? Or, to ſee Calvary's horrid ſcene, portrayed on the ſofteſt ornaments of the garden?—Is nature then actuated by the noble ambition, of paying commemorative honours, to her agonizing Sovereign? Is ſhe kindly officious to remind forgetful mortals, of that miracle of mercy; which it is their duty to contemplate, and their happineſs to believe?—Or, is a ſportive imagination my interpreter: and all the ſuppoſed reſemblance, no more than the precarious glaſs of fancy? Be it ſo: yet even fancy has her merit, when ſhe ſets forth, in ſuch pleaſing imagery, the crucified JESUS. Nor ſhould I refuſe a willing regard, to imagination herſelf; when ſhe employs her creative powers to revive the ſenſe of ſuch unparalleled love, and prompt my gratitude to ſo divine a friend.

THAT ſpiral Tendril, ariſing from the bottom of the Stalk; is it a repreſentation of the Scourge, which laſhed the Redeemer's unſpotted fleſh; and inflicted thoſe ſtripes, by which our ſouls are healed? Or, is it twiſted for the Cord, which bound his hands, in painful and ignominious confinement: thoſe beneficent hands, which were inceſſantly ſtretched out to unlooſe the heavy burthens, and to impart bleſſings of every choice kind?——Behold the Nails which were drenched in his ſacred Veins, and riveted his feet to the accurſed tree: thoſe beautiful * feet, which always went about doing good; and travelled far and near, to ſpread the glad tidings of everlaſting ſalvation.—See the Hammer, ponderous and maſſy, that drove the rugged irons

* 'How beautiful are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publiſheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publiſheth ſalvation!' Iſai. iii. 7.

through the racked nerves; that forced a paſſage for thoſe dreadful wedges, between the diſlocated bones:——View the Thorns, which encircled our Royal Maſter's brows, and ſhot their keen afflictive points into his bleſſed head: that head which was ever meditating peace to poor ſinners: and ſpent many a wakeful night in ardent prayer for their happineſs. O the ſmart! the fiercely throbing ſmart! when, inſtead of the triumphant laurel; or the odoriferous garland, that pungent and ragged wreath, was planted on the meek Meſſiah's forehead! When rude and barbarous blows of the ſtrong eaſtern cane *, ſtruck the prickly crown, and fixed every thorn deep in his tender temples†! ——There ſtand the Diſciples ranged in the green impalement; and forming a circle, round the inſtruments

* 'They took the reed,' ſays the ſacred hiſtorian, 'and ſmote him on the head!' "and ſo, as it were, "nailed down the thorns into his forehead and tem- "ples, and occaſioned thereby exquiſite pain, as well as "a great effuſion of blood."———Family Expoſitor, Vol. II. Sect. 188.——"It is moſt probable, adds the ſame judicious critic, this was a walking-ſtaff, which they put into his hand as a ſceptre; for a blow with a ſlight reed would ſcarce have been felt, or have deſerved a mention in a detail of ſuch dreadful ſufferings."

‖ The ſmart, attending this unparalleled piece of contemptuous barbarity, muſt be inexpreſſibly ſevere: not only, on account of the many painful punctures made in the fleſh; but principally, becauſe the perioſteum, a moſt exquiſitely ſenſible tegument of the bones; lying, in thoſe parts, very near the external ſkin; muſt receive a multitude of moſt terrible wounds. The anguiſh of which could not fail of being inflamed to an exceſs of rage, by the continuance of ſo many thorny lancets, in that extremely tender membrane; which, in ſuch a Caſe,

——tremblingly alive all o'er,
Muſt ſmart and agonize at ev'ry pore.

ſtruments of their great commander's torture. They ſtand wedged in firm battalion; appear like ſo many faithful adherents, that breathe a gallant reſolution, either of defending their Lord to the laſt extremity, or of dropping, in honourable deaths, by his ſide. O! that they had given ſuch proofs of zeal and fidelity in their conduct, as their ſteady poſture, and determined aſpect, ſeem to promiſe! But, alas! what is human firmneſs, when deſtitute of ſuccours from above, but an expiring vapour? What is every ſaint, if unſupported by powerful grace, but an abandoned traitor?—Obſerve the Glory, delineated in rays of imperial purple. But ah! how incapable are threads, though ſpun by ſummer's fineſt hand; though dyed in ſnows, or dipped in heaven; to diſplay the immaculate excellency of his human, or the ineffable majeſty of his divine nature! Compared with theſe ſublime perfections, the moſt vivid aſſemblage of colours fades into an unmeaning flatneſs; the moſt charming effects of light and ſhade are not only mere daubings, but an abſolute blank.

AMONG all the beauties, that ſhine in ſunny robes, and ſip the ſilver dews; this, I think, has the nobleſt import, if not the fineſt preſence. Were they all to paſs in review, and expect the award of ſuperiority from my deciſion; I ſhould not heſitate a moment. Be the prize aſſigned to this amiable candidate; which has ſo eminently diſtinguiſhed, and ſo highly dignified herſelf, by bearing ſuch a remarkable reſemblance to "The Righteous "Branch ‖: The Plant of renown."—While others appoint it a place in the Parterre; I would tranſplant the Paſſion flower, or rather transfer its ſacred ſignificancy, to my heart. There let it bloom, both in ſummer and in winter; bloom, in the moſt im-

‖ So the bleſſed Jeſus is deſcribed by Jer. xxiii. 5. by Ezek. xxxiv. 29.

preſſive characters, and with an undecaying luſtre. That I alſo may wear———wear on my very ſoul, the traces of Immanuel; pierced for my ſins, and bruiſed for my tranſgreſſions. That I alſo may be crucified with Chriſt ‡; at leaſt in penitential remorſe, and affectionate ſympathy. That I may know the fellowſhip of his ſufferings ¶; and feel all my evil affections wounded by his agonies, mortified by his death.

THERE is another ſubject of the verdant kingdom, which makes ſo very uncommon a figure, as juſtly claims my particular notice. One, ſo extremely diffident in her diſpoſition, and delicate in her conſtitution, that ſhe dares not venture herſelf abroad in the open air; but is nurſed up in the warmth of a hot bed, and lives cloiſtered in the cells of a green-houſe.———But the moſt curious peculiarity is, that of all our kindred ſpecies, ſhe alone partakes of perceptive life; at leaſt, advances neareſt to this more exalted ſtate of being; and may be looked on as the link, which connects the animal and the vegetable world. A ſtranger, obſerving her qualities, would almoſt be induced to ſuſpect; that ſhe is endued with ſome inferior degrees of conſciouſneſs and caution. For, if you offer to handle this Senſitive Plant, ſhe immediately takes the alarm; haſtily contracts her fibres: and, like a perſon under apprehenſions of violence, withdraws from your finger, in a kind of precipitate diſorder. Perhaps the beauty of her aſpect might be ſullied, or the niceneſs of her texture diſcompoſed, by the human touch. Therefore, like a coy virgin, ſhe keeps at a diſtance, from all unbecoming familiarities; and will admit no ſuch improper, if not pernicious, freedoms.

WHATEVER

‡ Gal. ii. 20. ¶ Phil. iii. 10.

WHATEVER be the cauſe of this unuſual effect; it ſuggeſts an inſtructive admonition, to the chriſtian. Such ſhould be our apprehenſive, timorous care, with regard to ſin; and all, even the moſt diſtant approaches of vice. We ſhould avoid the very appearance of evil, and ſtand aloof from every occaſion of falling.—If ſinners entice; if forbidden pleaſures tempt; or if opportunity beckon with the gain of injuſtice in her hand; turn from the gilded ſnare; touch not the beauteous bane; but fly, fly with haſte, fly without any delay, from the bewitching ruin.—Does anger draw near with her lighted torch, to kindle the flame of reſentment in our breaſts? Does flattery ply our ears with her inchanting and intoxicating whiſpers? Would diſcontent lay her leaden hand upon our tempers, and mould into our minds our ſour leaven; in order to make us a burden to ourſelves, and unamiable to others? Inſtantly let us divert our attention from the dangerous objects; and not ſo much endeavour to antidote, as to ſhun the moral contagion. Let us revolve, in our meditations, that wonderful meekneſs of our diſtreſſed Maſter; which, amidſt the moſt abuſive and provoking inſults, maitained an uniform tenor of unſhaken ſerenity. Let us contemplate that prodigious humiliation; which brought him from an infinite height above all worlds, to make his bed in the duſt of death. Let us ſooth our jarring, our uneaſy paſſions, by an attentive reflection on that chearfulneſs and reſignation; which rendered him, in the deepeſt poverty, unfeignedly thankful; and, under the heavieſt tribulations, moſt ſubmiſſively patient.

HARBOUR not, therefore, on any conſideration, the betrayer of our virtue. Be deaf, inflexibly deaf, to the beguiling ſolicitation. If it obtrude into the unguarded heart; give it entertainment, no,

not for a moment. To parly with the enemy, is to open a door for deſtruction. Our ſafety conſiſts in flight: and, in this caſe, ſuſpicion is the trueſt prudence; fear, the greateſt bravery.——Play not on the brink of the precipice. Flutter not round the edges of the flame. Dally not with the ſtings of death. But reject, with a becoming mixture of ſolicitude and abhorrence, the very firſt inſinuations of iniquity; as cautiouſly, as the ſmarting ſore ſhrinks even from the ſofteſt hand; as conſtantly as this jealous plant recoils at the approaching touch *.

Not

* The Prophet Iſaiah, in an elegant and lively deſcription of the upright man, ſays, he ſhaketh his hands from holding of bribes; and I may add, from practiſing any kind of iniquity. The image, exceedingly beautiful, and equally expreſſive, both illuſtrates and enforces the doctrine of this whole ſection.—Shaketh his hands; juſt as a perſon would do, who happens to have burning coals fall into his lap, or ſome venemous creature faſtening upon his fleſh. In ſuch a caſe, none would ſtand a moment to conſider; none would debate with himſelf, the expediency of the things; but, inſtantly fling off the pernicious incumbrance; inſtantly endeavour to diſengage himſelf from the clinging miſchief.——Iſai. xxxiii. 13.

I have repreſented the danger of not ſmothering immediately the very firſt ſparks of temptation, in a variety of views. Becauſe, a proper behaviour, in this conjuncture, is of ſuch vaſt importance to the purity, the ſafety, and the comfort of our minds.——Becauſe I had the royal moraliſt in my eye; who deterring his pupils from the path of the wicked, cries, with an air of deep concern, and in the language of vehement importunity, cries, avoid it; paſs not by it; turn from it, and paſs away. How ſtrongly is the counſel urged, by being ſo frequently repeated, in ſuch a remarkable diverſity of conciſe and abrupt, conſequently of forcible and preſſing admonitions! Prov. iv. 15.

NOT long ago, theſe curious productions of the ſpring were coarſe and miſ-ſhapen roots. Had we opened the earth, and beheld them in their ſeed; how uncouth and contemptible, had their appearance been;—but now, they are the boaſt of nature; the delight of the ſons of men; finiſhed patterns for enameling and embroidery; outſhining even the happieſt ſtrokes of the pencil. They are taught to bloom, but with a very inferior luſtre†, in the richeſt tapeſtries, and moſt magnificent ſilks. Art never attempts to equal their incomparable elegancies; but places all her merit, in copying after theſe delicate originals. Even thoſe, that glitter in ſilver, or whoſe cloathing is of wrought gold; are proud to borrow additional ornaments, from a ſprig of jeſſamine, or a little aſſemblage of pinks.

WHAT a fine idea may we form, from hence, of the Reſurrection of the Juſt, and the ſtate of their re-animated bodies! As, the roots even of our choiceſt Flowers, when depoſited in the ground, are rude and ungraceful; but, when they ſpring up into blooming life, are moſt exquiſitely elegant; ſo, the poor fleſh of a Saint, when committed to the duſt, alas! what is it? A heap of corruption; a maſs of putrefying clay. But, when it obeys the great archangel's call, and ſtarts into renewed exiſtence; O! what an aſtoniſhing change enſues! What a moſt prodigious improvement takes place! —That which was ſown in weakneſs, will be raiſed in all the vivacity of power. That which was ſown in deformity, will be raiſed in the bloom of celeſtial

† The cowſlips ſmiles in brighter yellow dreſt,
Than that which veils the nubile virgin's breaſt:
A fairer red ſtands bluſhing in the roſe,
Than that which on the bridegroom's veſtment flows.
PRICE's Solom.

celeſtial beauty; and ſhine "as the brightneſs of "the firmament," when it darts the inimitable blue, through the fleeces——the ſnowy fleeces of ſome cleaving cloud.

FEAR not, then, thou faithful chriſtian; fear not at the appointed time, to deſcend into the tomb. Thy ſoul thou mayſt truſt with thy omnipotent Redeemer, who is LORD of the unſeen world; "who "has the keys of hell, and of death." Moſt ſafely mayeſt thou truſt thy better part, in thoſe beneficent hands, which were pierced with nails, and faſtened to the ignominious tree, for thy ſalvation—and, with regard to thy fleſhy tabernacle, be not diſmayed; it is only taken down, to be rebuilt upon a diviner plan, and in a more heavenly form. If it retire into the ſhadow of death, and gloom of the grave: it is only to return from a ſhort confinement, to endleſs liberty. If it dies, it is in order to riſe more illuſtrious from its ruins; and wear an infinitely brighter face, of perfection, and of glory*.

HAVING, now, made my panegyric; let me, next, take up a lamentation, for theſe ſweeteſt productions of the vegetable world.——For, I foreſee their approaching doom: yet a little while, and all theſe pleaſing ſcenes vaniſh: yet a little while, and all the ſweets of the breathing, all the beauties of the blooming ſpring, periſh. Every one of theſe amiable forms muſt be ſhriveled to deformity, and trodden to the earth.———Significant reſemblance this, of all created beauty. All fleſh is graſs, ſaith the prophetic voice, and all the goodlineſs thereof as the flower of the field. Behold, then, ye brighteſt among the daughters of Eve; behold yourſelves

* The Wiſe, the Juſt, the Pious, and the Brave,
Live in their Death, and flouriſh from the Grave,
Grain hid in Earth repays the Peaſant's Care;
And Ev'ning Suns but ſet to riſe more fair.

ſelves in this glaſs. See the charms of your perſon eclipſed, by the luſtre of theſe little flowers; and the frailty of your ſtate repreſented, * by their tranſient glories. A fever may ſcorch thoſe poliſhed

* Και το ροδον καλον εϛι, και ο χρονος αυ̃λο μαραινει.
Και το ιον καλον εϛιν εν ειαρι, και ταχυ γηρα.
Λευκον το κρινον εϛι, μαραινε̃ται ανικα πιπλη.
Α δε χιων λευκα, και τακε̃ται ανικα παχθη.
Και καλλος καλον εϛι το παιδικον αλλ ολιγον ζη.
THEOCR. Idyl. 24.

When ſnows deſcend, and robe the fields
In Winter's bright array;
Touch'd by the ſan, the luſtre fades,
And weeps itſelf away.

When Spring appears; when vi'lets blow,
And ſhed a rich perfume;
How ſoon the fragrance breathes its laſt!
How ſhort liv'd is the bloom!

Freſh in the morn, the Summer roſe,
Hangs wither'd ere 'tis noon:
We ſcarce enjoy the balmy gift,
But mourn the pleaſure gone.

With gliding fire, an ev'ning ſtar
Streaks the Autumnal ſkies;
Shook from its ſeat it darts away,
And in an inſtant dies.

Such are the charms that fluſh the cheek,
And ſparkle in the eye:
So from the lovely finiſh'd form
The tranſient graces fly.

To this the ſeaſons, as they roll,
Their atteſtation bring:
They warn the Fair; their ev'ry round
Confirms the truth I ſing.

poliſhed veins; a conſumption emaciate the dimpling cheeks; a load of unexpected ſorrows depreſs thoſe lively ſpirits. Or, if theſe diſaſters in pity ſpare the tender frame, yet age, inexorable age and wrinkles, will come at laſt; will wither the fine features, and blaſt every ſprightly grace.

THEN, ye fair, when thoſe ſparkling eyes are darkened, and ſink in their orbs; when they are rolling in agonies, or ſwimming in death—how will you ſuſtain the affliction? How will you repair the loſs?——Oh! apply your thoughts to religion; chooſe and attend to the one thing needful. Believe in, and imitate the bleſſed Jeſus: then ſhall your ſouls mount up to the realms of happineſs; when the well-proportioned clay is mingling with its mean original. The bright beams of GOD's countenance will irradiate, with a matchleſs perfection, all their faculties. Cleanſed entirely from every dreg of corruption, like ſome unſullied mirror, they will reflect the complete image of their Creator's holineſs.—O! that you would thus dreſs your minds, and prepare for the immortal ſtate! Then, from ſhining among your fellow-creatures on earth, you ſhall be tranſlated to ſhine around the throne of GOD for ever and ever. Then, from being the ſweetners of our life and the delight of our eyes here below, you ſhall paſs, by an eaſy tranſition, into angels of light; and become "an everlaſting "excellency, the joy of all generations."

YES; ye flowery nations, ye muſt all decay.—Yonder lily, that looks like the queen of the gay creation—See, how gracefully it erects its majeſtic head! What an air of dignity and grandeur ennobles its aſpect! For elevated mien, as well as incomparable luſtre, juſtly may it be preferred to the

the magnificent monarch of the eaſt*. But, all ſtately and charming as it is, it will hardly ſurvive a few more days: and unſpotted whiteneſs muſt quickly be tarniſhed; and the ſnowy form defiled in the duſt.

As the Lily pleaſes, with the noble ſimplicity of its appearance; the Tulip is admired, for the gaiety and multiplicity of its colours. What a profuſion of dyes arrays its painted cup! Its tinges are ſo glowing; its contraſts ſo ſtrong; and the arrangement of them both, ſo elegant and artful!—'Twas lately the pride of the border, and the reigning beauty of the delightful ſeaſon. As exquiſitely fine as the rainbow, and almoſt as extremely tranſient; it ſpread, for a little moment, its glittering plumage: but has, now, laid all its diſtinguiſhed honours down. Thoſe radiant ſtripes are blended, alas! rudely blended, with common mould.

To a graceful ſhape, and blooming complexion, the roſe adds the moſt agreeable perfume. Our noſtrils make it repeated viſits, and are never weary of drinking its ſweets. A fragrance, ſo peculiarly rich and reviving, tranſpires from its opening tufts; that every one covets its acquaintance. How have I ſeen even the accompliſhed Clariſſa, for whom ſo many votaries languiſh, fondly careſſing this little flower! That lovely boſom, which is the ſeat of innocence and virtue; whoſe leaſt excellency it is, to rival the delicacy of the pureſt ſnows; among a thouſand charms of its own, thinks it poſſible to adopt another from the damaſk roſe-bud.——Yet even this univerſal favourite muſt fail. Its native balm cannot preſerve it from putrefaction. Soon, ſoon, muſt it reſign all thoſe endearing qualities; and hang neglected on its ſtem, or drop deſpiſed to the ground.

ONE

* Mat. vi. 29.

One could wiſh, methinks, theſe lovelieſt of the inanimate race, a longer exiſtence: but in vain: They fade, almoſt as ſoon as they flouriſh: Within leſs than a month, their glories are extinct. Let the ſun take a few more journeys through the ſky: then, viſit this inchanted walk; and you will find nothing, but a wretched wilderneſs of ragged or naked ſtalks.———But O! (My ſoul exults in the thought) the garment of celeſtial glory, which ſhall ere-long array the re-animated body, will never wax old. The illuſtrious robes of a Saviour's conſummate righteouſneſs, which are appointed to deck the juſtified ſpirit, are incorruptible and immortal. No moth can corrode their texture; no number of ages ſully their brightneſs. The light of day may be quenched, and all the ſtars ſink in obſcurity; but, the honours of "Juſt men, "made perfect," are ſubject to no diminution: inextinguiſhable and unfading, is the luſtre of their crown.

Yes; ye flowry nations, ye muſt all decay.—— Winter, like ſome enraged and irreſiſtible conqueror, that carries fire and ſword, wherever he advances; demoliſhes towns; depopulates countries; ſpreads ſlaughter and deſolation on every ſide—So, juſt ſo, will winter, with his ſavage and unrelenting blaſts, invade this beautiful proſpect. The ſtorms are gathering, and the tempeſts muſtering their rage, to fall upon theſe vegetable kingdoms. They will ravage through the dominions of nature; and plunder her riches, and lay waſte her charms.—— Then, ye trees, muſt ye ſtand ſtript of your verdant apparel; and, ye fields, be ſpoiled of your waving treaſures. Then, the earth, diſrobed of all her gay attire, muſt ſit in ſables, like a diſconſolate widow: The ſun too, that now rides in triumph round the world, and ſcatters gaiety from his

his radiant eye, will then look faintly from the windows of the ſouth; and, caſting a ſhort glance on our dejected world, will leave us the uncomfortable gloom of tedious nights.—Then, theſe pretty choireſters of the air will chant no more to the gentle gales. The Lark, the Linnet, and all the feathered ſongſters, abandon their notes, and indulge their woes. Mute is every ſhrill and tuneful pipe: the harmony of the woods is at an end: and ſilence, (unleſs interrupted by howling winds) ſullen ſilence, ſits brooding upon the boughs; that are now made vocal, by a thouſand warbling throats.

But, O! raviſhing remembrance! the ſongs of ſaints in light never admit a pauſe for ſadneſs. All heaven will reſound with the melody of their gratitude; and all eternity echo to their triumphant acclamations. The Hallelujahs of that world; and the harmonious Joy of its Inhabitants; will be as laſting, as the divine Perfections they celebrate.—Come then, holy love, and tune my heart; deſcend, celeſtial fire, and touch my tongue; that I may ſtand ready to ſtrike up, and bear my part, in that great hoſanna, that everlaſting hymn.

Yes; yes; ye flowery nations, ye muſt all decay —And, indeed, could you add the ſtrength of an oak, or the ſtability of a pyramid†, to all the delicacy

† I know not any performance, in which the tranſitory nature of theſe moſt durable monuments of human grandeur, is hinted with ſuch a modeſt air of inſtruction; or their hideous ruin deſcribed, in ſuch a pomp of pleaſing horror; as in a ſmall, but ſolemn, pictureſque, and majeſtic poem, intitled——The Ruins of Rome, written by the Rev. Mr. Dyer; whom the reader (if he has the pleaſure of peruſing that beautiful piece) will eaſily perceive to have drawn from the originals themſelves:

delicacy of your texture; yet ſhort, exceeding ſhort even then, would your duration be. For, I ſee, that all things come to an end. The pillars of nature are tottering; the foundations of the round world are falling away: "The heavens them-"ſelves wax old like a garment."——But, amidſt theſe views of general ruin, here is our refuge; this our conſolation; 'we know that our Redeemer liveth.' Thy years, bleſſed Jeſus, ſhall not fail; from everlaſting to everlaſting, Thou art ſtill the ſame; the ſame moſt excellent and adorable Being; the ſame omnipotent and faithful friend; the ſame all-ſufficient and ineſtimable portion. O! may we but partake of thy merits; be ſanctified by thy grace; and received into thy glory!———Then, periſh if ye will, all inferior delights. Let all that is ſplendid in the ſkies expire; and all that is amiable in nature be expunged. Let the whole extent of creation be turned again into one undiſtinguiſhable void; one univerſal blank:—Yet, if God be ours, we ſhall have enough: If God be ours, we ſhall have all, and abound ‡: All that our circumſtances can want, or our wiſhes crave to make us inconceivably bleſſed and happy: bleſſed and happy, not only

ſelves; as nothing but the ſight of thoſe magnificent remains, could have inſpired his lines with ſuch vivacity.—As a ſpecimen of the work, and a confirmation of the remarks ſuggeſted above, I take leave to tranſcribe the following lines;

——The pilgrim oft,
At dead of night, mid his oraiſon hears
Aghaſt the voice of time, diſparting tow'rs,
Tumbling all precipitate down daſh'd,
Rattling around, loud thund'ring to the moon.
‡ His hand the good Man faſtens on the ſkies,
And bids earth roll, nor feels the idle whirl.
Night-Thoughts, No. IV.

only through this little interval of time, but through the unmeaſurable revolutions of eternity.

THE ſun, is now come forth in his ſtrength; and beats fiercely upon my throbbing pulſe.——— Let me retire to yonder inviting arbour. There, the Woodbines retain the lucid drop; and the Jeſſamines, that line the verdant alcove, are ſtill impearled with dews.———Welcome, ye refreſhing ſhades! I feel, I feel, your chearing influence. My languid ſpirits revive; the ſlackened ſinews are newſtrung; and life bounds briſker, through all her crimſon channels.

RECLINED on this moſſy couch; and ſurrounded by this fragant coolneſs; let me renew my aſpirations, to the ever-preſent Deity. Here, let me remember, and imitate, the pious Auguſtine, and his mother Monica. Who, being engaged in diſcourſe, on the beauties of the viſible creation; roſe by theſe ladders, to the glories, of the inviſible ſtate; till they were inſpired with the moſt affecting ſenſe, of their ſupereminent excellency, and actuated with the moſt ardent breathing, after their full enjoyment. Inſomuch, that they were almoſt wrapt up into the bliſs they contemplated; and "ſcarce knew, whether they were in the body, or "out of the body."

WHEN tempeſts toſs the ocean; when plaintive ſignals of diſtreſs are heard from the bellowing deep; and melancholy tokens of Shipwreck come floating on the foaming ſurge: then, how delightful to ſtand ſafe on ſhore, and hug one's ſelf in conſcious ſecurity†!——When a glut of waters burſts from

† As, Lucretius gave the hint for theſe obſervations; ſo, he aſſigns the reaſon of the pleaſure ſpecified. It ariſes, not from the conſideration of another's miſery: this

from ſome mighty torrent; ruſhes headlong over all the neighbouring plains; ſweeps away the helpleſs cattle; and drives the affrighted ſhepherd from his hut: then, from the top of a diſtant eminence, to deſcry the danger, we need not fear; how pleaſing!—Such, methinks, is my preſent ſituation; for now, the ſun blazes from on high: the air glows with his fire: the fields are rent with chinks: the roads are ſcorched to duſt: the woods ſeem to contract a ſickly aſpect, and a ruſſet hue: the traveller, broiled as he rides, haſtens to his inn, and intermits his journey: the labourer, bathed in ſweat, drops the ſcythe, and deſiſts from his work: the cattle flee to ſome ſhady covert, or elſe pant and toſs under the burning noon. Even the ſtubborn rock, ſmit with the piercing beam, is ready to cleave. All things languiſh, beneath the dazzling deluge—While I ſhall enjoy a cool hour, and calm reflection; amidſt the gloom of this bowery receſs, that ſcarce admits one ſpeck of ſunſhine.

THUS, may both the flock, and their ſhepherd, "dwell beneath the defence of the Moſt High, and abide under the ſhadow of the Almighty ‡." Then, though † the peſtilence walketh in darkneſs, and the ſickneſs deſtroyeth at noon-day, though thouſands fall beſides us, and ten thouſands at our right-hand; we need fear no evil. Either the deſtroying

this would argue the rankeſt malevolence; but, from the agreeable contemplation of our own perſonal ſafety: which, while we view circumſtances, that are pernicious to others, but harmleſs to ourſelves, is not a little heightened by the contraſt.—Suave Mari magno, &c.

‡ Pſalm xci. 1.

† This was written, when a very infectious and mortal diſtemper raged in the neighbourhood.

ing angel ſhall paſs over our houſes; or elſe, he ſhall diſpenſe the corrections of a friend, not the ſcourges of an enemy; which, inſtead of hurting us, ſhall work for our good.———Then, though Profaneneſs and Infidelity, far more malignant evils, breathe deadly contagion, and taint the morals of multitudes around us; yet, if the Great Father of ſpirits "hide us in the hollow of his hand," we ſhall hold faſt our integrity, and be faithful unto death.

LET then, deareſt Lord, O! let thy ſervant, and the people committed to his care, be received into thy protection. Let us take ſanctuary under that tree of life, erect in thy ignominious croſs; let us fly for ſafety to that city of refuge, opened in thy bleeding wounds. Theſe ſhall be a ſacred hiding-place, not to be pierced by the flames of divine wrath, or the fiery darts of temptation. Thy dying merits, and perfect obedience, ſhall be to our ſouls, "as rivers of water in a dry place, or as the ſhadow of a great rock in a weary land." ¶

BUT moſt of all, in that laſt tremendous day, when the heavens are rent aſunder, and wrapt up like a ſcroll: when the Almighty Arm ſhall arreſt the ſun in his career, and daſh to pieces the ſtructure of the univerſe; when the dead, both ſmall and great, ſhall be gathered before the throne of thy glory; and the fates of all mankind hang on the very point of a final irreverſible deciſion:——Then, bleſſed JESUS, let us be owned by thee, and we ſhall not be aſhamed: defended by thee, and ſhall not be afraid. O! may we, at that awful, that unutterably important juncture, be covered with the wings of thy redeeming love; and we ſhall behold all the horrible convulſions of expiring nature, with compoſure, with comfort! We ſhall even

¶ Iſai. xxxii. 2.

even welcome the conſummation of all things, as the "Times of refreſhing from the preſence of the Lord"†.

THERE are, I perceive, who ſtill attend the flowers; and, in defiance of the ſun, ply their work on every expanded bloſſom. The Bees, I mean, that nation of chymiſts! To whom nature has communicated the rare and valuable ſecret of enriching themſelves, without impoveriſhing others. Who extract the moſt delicious ſyrup, from every fragrant herb; without wounding its ſubſtance, or diminiſhing its odours. I take the more notice of theſe ingenious operators; becauſe, I would willingly make them my pattern §. While the gay butterfly flutters her painted wings; and ſips a little fantaſtic delight, only for the preſent moment: while the gloomy ſpider, worſe than idly buſied, is preparing his inſidious nets for deſtruction; or ſucking venom, even from the moſt wholeſome plants: this frugal community are wiſely employed in providing for futurity; and collecting a copious ſtock, of the moſt balmy treaſures.——And O! might theſe meditations ſink into my ſoul! would the God, who ſuggeſted each heavenly thought, vouchſafe to convert it into an eſtabliſhed principle; to determine all my inclinations, and regulate my whole conduct; I ſhould, then, gather advantages from the ſame blooming objects; more precious than your golden ſtores, ye induſtrious artiſts. I alſo ſhould go home laden with the richeſt ſweets, and nobleſt ſpoils; though I crop not a leaf, nor call a ſingle flower my own.

HERE

† Acts iii. 19.

§ —— Ego apis matinæ
More modoque
Grata carpentis thyma. HOR.

HERE I behold, aſſembled, in one view, almoſt all the various beauties, that have been ſeverally entertaining my imagination. The Viſtas, ſtruck through an antient wood, or formed by rows of venerable elms; conducting the ſpectator's obſervation, to ſome amiable object; or leading the traveller's footſteps, to this delightful ſeat:——The walls, enriched with fruit-trees, and faced with a covering of their leafy extenſions; I ſhould rather have ſaid, hung with different pieces of nature's nobleſt tapeſtry:————The walks, neatly ſhorn, and lined with verdure; or finely ſmoothed, and coated with gravel:———The alleys, arched with ſhades, to embower our noon-tide repoſe; or thrown open for the free acceſſion of air, to invite us to our evening recreation:———The decent edgings of box, that incloſe, like a plain ſelvage, each beautiful compartment, and its ſplendid figures:——The ſhapely evergreens, and flowering ſhrubs; that ſtrike the eye, and appear with peculiar dignity in this diſtant ſituation:——The baſon, with its cryſtal fount, floating in the centre; and diffuſing an agreeable freſhneſs through the whole:——The waters, falling from a remote caſcade; and gently murmuring, as they flow along the pebbles:——Theſe, added to the reſt; and all ſo diſpoſed, that each recommends and endears each; renders the whole a moſt ſweet raviſhing ſcene of order and variety, of elegance and magnificence.

FROM ſo many lovely proſpects, cluſtering upon one's ſight, it is impoſſible not to be reminded of heaven: that world of bliſs; thoſe regions of light; where the Lamb that was ſlain manifeſts his beatific preſence, and his ſaints live for evermore.——But O! what pencil can ſketch out a draught of that goodly land? What language expreſs the incomparable ſplendors of Immanuel's kingdom?

Would

Would ſome celeſtial hand draw aſide the veil, but for one moment; and permit us to throw a ſingle glance on thoſe divine abodes; how would all ſublunary poſſeſſions become tarniſhed in our eyes, and grow flat upon our taſte! One tranſient glimpſe of thoſe unutterable beatitudes would captivate our ſouls, and engroſs all their faculties. Eden itſelf, after ſuch a viſion, would appear a chearleſs deſart; and all earthly charms, intolerable deformity.

VERY excellent things are ſpoken of thee, thou city of God §. Volumes have been written, and thoſe by inſpired men, to diſplay the wonders of thy perfections. All that is rich and reſplendent in the viſible creation has been called in to aid our conceptions, and elevate our ideas. But, indeed, no tongue can utter; no pen can deſcribe; no fancy can imagine; what God, of his unbounded munificence, has prepared for them that love him. ——Seeing then, that all terreſtrial things muſt come to a ſpeedy end; and there remaineth ſuch a reſt, ſuch a bliſsful and everlaſting reſt, for the people of God; let me never be too fondly attached, to any preſent ſatisfactions. Weaned from whatever is temporal, may I maintain a ſuperior indifference, for ſuch tranſitory enjoyments; but long, long earneſtly for the manſions that are above; the paradiſe, "which the Lord hath planted, and not man." Thither, may I tranſmit the chief of my converſation; and from thence, expect the whole of my happineſs. Be that the ſacred, powerful magnet, which ever influences my heart; ever attracts my affections. There are ſuch tranſcendent glories, as eye has not ſeen; There are ſuch tranſporting pleaſures, as ear has not

§ Pſalm lxxxvii. 2.

not heard: There is ſuch a fulneſs of joys, as the thought of man cannot conceive.

INTO that conſummate felicity; thoſe eternal fruitions, permit me, Madam, to wiſh you, in due time, an abundant entrance: and to aſſure you that this wiſh is breathed with the ſame ſincerity and ardour for my honoured correſpondent, as it is, Madam, for

Your moſt obedient, &c.

J. HERVEY.

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